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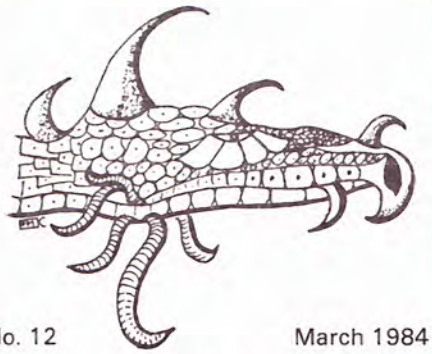

No. 12 March 1984

Published by TSR UK Ltd

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Editorial

Look up **Imagine** in a dictionary and it will say something like 'to use the imagination'.... Big Deal. Look up Imagination, and first it says 'the act of imagining', at which you sigh, but read on: 'the creative facility, the operation of the mind, thinking, thought, opinion, the ability to create original and striking images and concepts.' Then look up Creative, and you will find 'originality of thought and execution.'

Whether you are a new reader, or you have been with us for a while, you will see that, taken together, these are the things that this magazine, and the hobby of role-playing, are all about. **IMAGINE** magazine is, hopefully, fulfilling the promise of its title.

Keith Thomson

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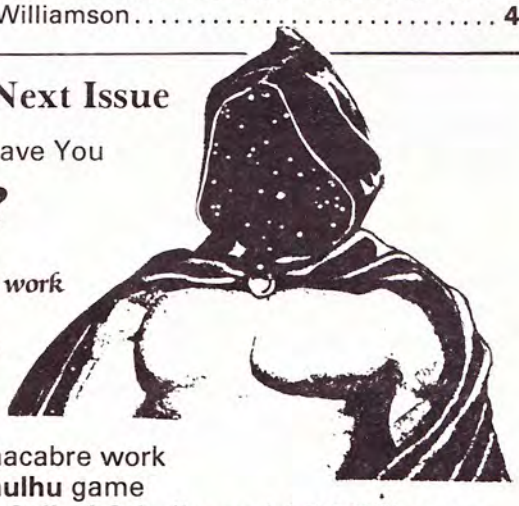

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IMAGINE magazine is available from all good hobby shops and newsagents. It is distributed through the newstrade by Seymour Press Ltd, 334 Brixton Road, LONDON SW9 7AG. It is also available direct from the publisher by individual subscription. The subscription rate is £12 for twelve issues.

Back issues of IMAGINE magazine, where still available, can be bought directly from the publisher for the price of £1.00 (plus 50p postage and packing). Payment must accompany all orders. If one or more issues in an order are out of print, a credit note will be substituted which may be exchanged for cash or merchandise from the publisher.

The issue of expiration for each subscription will be printed on the subscriber's mailing label. Changes of address must be notified to the publisher at least 30 days before the effective change to ensure uninterrupted delivery.

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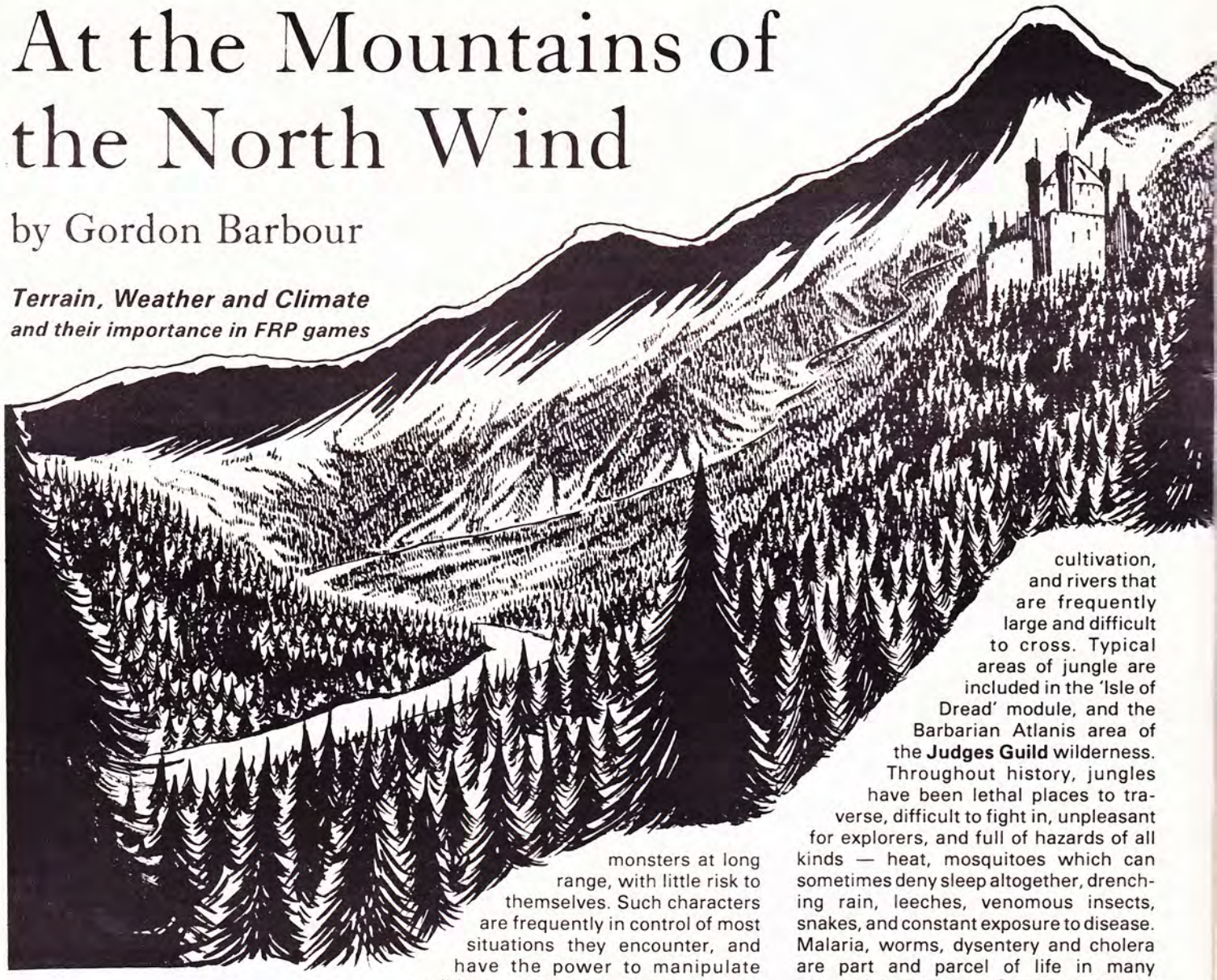
IMAGINE magazine gratefully acknowledges the support offered by its sister publication, DRAGON® magazine, published by TSR Inc, PO Box 756, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin 53147, USA. Articles appearing in IMAGINE magazine may have appeared previously in that publication.

At the Mountains of the North Wind

by Gordon Barbour

Terrain, Weather and Climate
and their importance in FRP games



Players and Games Masters (GMs) often ignore the most fantastic or dramatic countryside and weather in role-playing games, and thus let slip many opportunities for concealment and surprise.

Through terrain and climate, GMs have a perfect chance to make their scenario come to life, fleshing it out and introducing an aspect of the cinematic to their narrative. If the players can visualize the GM's description of the nature of the countryside, it makes encounters, or even the business of getting from A to B, a much more exciting matter. This holds true for any FRP game, be it the **D&D®** game, **Runequest, Traveller** or any other, though the examples given here are chiefly from the **AD&D™** game.

On a practical level, weather and countryside can be utilised extremely effectively to pose more difficult problems for a strong party. A GM dealing with a potent medium or high level party faces a group of experienced players, well tricked-out with items that enable them to locate, engage and destroy his precious monsters at long range, with little risk to themselves. Such characters are frequently in control of most situations they encounter, and have the power to manipulate conditions to suit them. This is a critical component of party strength, and there are two basic ways the GM can respond. He can use overkill, or he can be more subtle, and use perfectly ordinary manifestations of climate and terrain to weaken the party's offensive ability and deal blows to their curative powers and morale.

Overkill may occasionally be fun, but in realistic terms, it is far more desirable to use the crippling effect of difficult terrain and bad weather to achieve five major objectives:

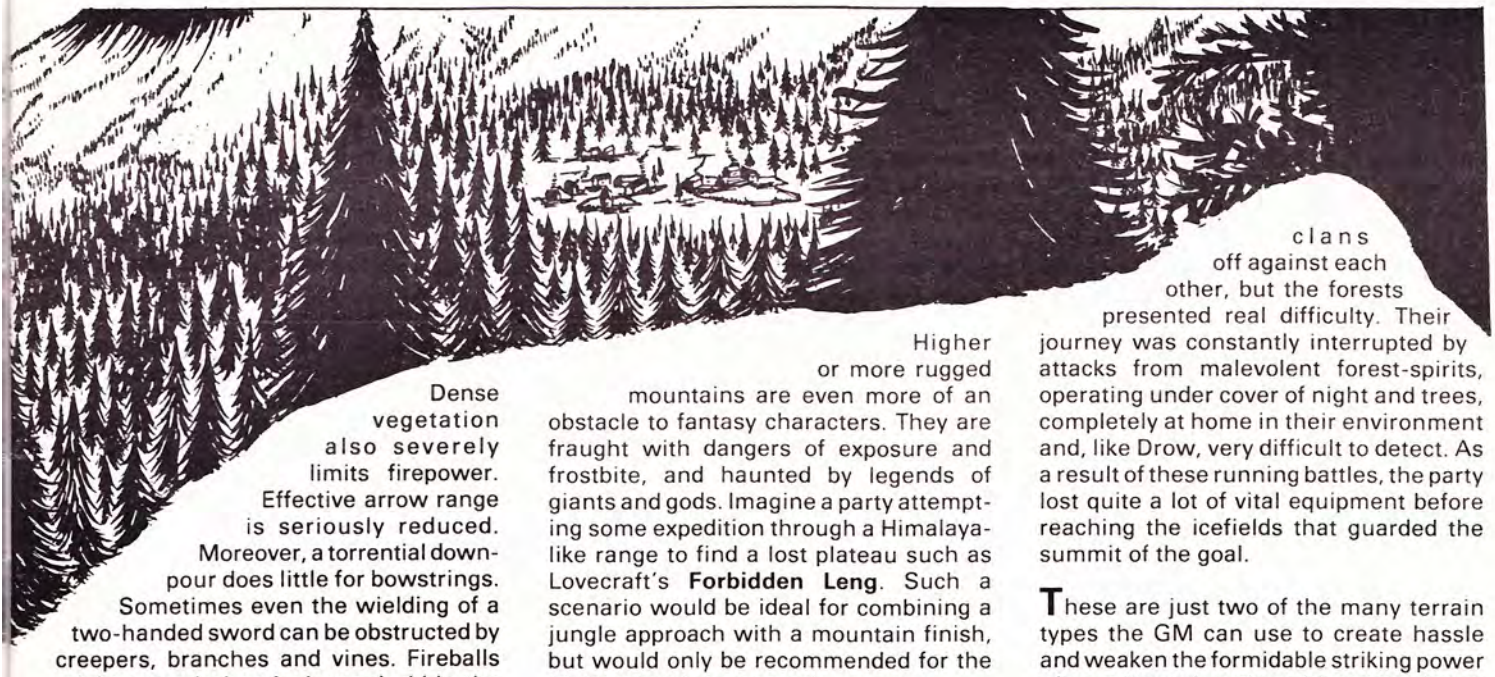
1) Limitation of party movement
2) Limitation of party detection ability
3) Limitation of party firepower
4) Physical and moral attrition of the party's strength through natural hazards and disease
5) Building up paranoia, dissension and disaffection among the party members.

Two of the main types of terrain that lend themselves to all four objectives are jungle and mountains.

Jungle terrain difficulties include rainforest, with its tall trees, undergrowth and lack of paths, mountains in many jungle areas, swamps, the impassable scrub jungle that is a result of shifting cultivation, and rivers that are frequently large and difficult to cross. Typical areas of jungle are included in the 'Isle of Dread' module, and the Barbarian Atlanis area of the **Judges Guild** wilderness. Throughout history, jungles have been lethal places to traverse, difficult to fight in, unpleasant for explorers, and full of hazards of all kinds — heat, mosquitoes which can sometimes deny sleep altogether, drenching rain, leeches, venomous insects, snakes, and constant exposure to disease. Malaria, worms, dysentery and cholera are part and parcel of life in many equatorial countries. Somehow I think clerics should be very busy keeping the party disease-free.

The configuration of terrain, often made worse by frequent rainstorms, can seriously limit a party's movements. Jungle is **thick**. In large areas of jungle, the only access to the interior is by river. Native villages lie along these rivers, so co-operation or coercion is essential.... Moving any sort of supplies overland under these conditions can therefore force a party to use up valuable **fly** or even **teleport** spells to circumnavigate the difficulties of movement.

Ambush is the classic scenario in jungle fighting, because no other country is quite so well suited to cover. With visibility at a minimum, the enemy can appear literally on top of the players. Jungle beasts move silently and with considerable capacity for self-concealment. Tribes of natives can wreak horrendous damage on a party, attacking with blowpipes from concealed positions, utilising poison-snake traps, and eventually coming in with parangs to finish off the quivering remnants. In such dense country, characters' abilities of visual detection are reduced. Sending scouts off to reconnoitre is dangerous — they are prey to all the forest's hostile elements.



Dense vegetation also severely limits firepower. Effective arrow range is seriously reduced. Moreover, a torrential downpour does little for bowstrings. Sometimes even the wielding of a two-handed sword can be obstructed by creepers, branches and vines. Fireballs might come in handy, but a druid in the party, who might otherwise be instrumental in getting round some of the problems of movement, will probably take a dim view of precious vegetation being callously blown to bits.

Bandits with their lair in swamp country could use small sampan-style boats, and dig their hideaways beneath huts with tunnels running to the river bank — meanwhile sowing all approaches with lethal traps.

Finally, here is a normal, everyday creature which could prove a nightmare swamp monster to parties. In the upland marshes of Central Sulawesi there lives a deadly type of liver-fluke which enters the body through the skin. This accounts for the extraordinary mortality rate among the natives and much of the local fauna. Research teams enter the area in wetsuits, and any exposure of skin to the water is disaster. Think about the effects of that on an unprepared party!

Thus to set a difficult expedition for a medium-level party without great teleport capacity, there can be few better wildernesses than a jungle rainforest, with the final objective an oriental temple lying ruined among mountains that touch the sky.

Mountains can be equally upsetting to an ill-prepared party. The GM has a whole range of potentially tricky terrain and weather to choose from. The mountains need not be particularly high: anyone who has travelled over the desolate ridges of eastern Turkey and Iran can see just how perfectly the terrain is adapted to fantasy adventure. The same country that Alexander's armies traversed and Crusader knights sacked, from Antioch to Ankara and the Caucasus, is filled with ruined forts and dungeons and grim legends. Afghan-style tribesmen who know every path and foot of rock, every cave and hiding place, could harrass any party of intruders with the same ferocity as they have throughout history, and the potential for ambush among the narrow defiles is boundless.

Higher or more rugged mountains are even more of an obstacle to fantasy characters. They are fraught with dangers of exposure and frostbite, and haunted by legends of giants and gods. Imagine a party attempting some expedition through a Himalaya-like range to find a lost plateau such as Lovecraft's **Forbidden Leng**. Such a scenario would be ideal for combining a jungle approach with a mountain finish, but would only be recommended for the highest level characters!

The physical aspects of mountains severely limit movement. Weather conditions can reduce a party's detection capabilities: blizzards, white-outs, mist and clouds can reduce visibility to nil. Imagine firing off a **wand of enemy detection** in the middle of a white-out, and picking up three traces, thirty yards away and closing rapidly. Bolder souls might dismiss the monsters as mere wolves; paranoid players might be convinced that three white dragons or ice demons were out there. This sort of speculation creates panic out of all proportion to the winter wolves that finally appear.

Unless a party is adequately equipped for operating in snow and ice conditions, it will suffer considerably from exposure and frostbite. The obvious party response is a **Leomund's Tiny Hut**, or sleeping up a **rope trick** with **extension** cast upon it. Fair enough: but it uses up precious spells.

Mountain encounters can be unusually deadly. A high-level party attacked by a couple of rocs on the level can usually take care of itself. But suppose that same party is trying to struggle up a face such as the North Wall of the Eiger, with its lead fighter in the middle of negotiating an overhang and the rest of the characters clinging precariously to belays. Then those same two monsters are altogether more formidable.

The pattern of a typical mountain expedition can be illustrated by the tale of one party instructed to raid the halls of an ancient white dragon and his family in a remote mountain area in mid-winter. Medium-level characters had to undertake a trek through many miles of hill country and forest before reaching the objective, and the way was guarded by hostile tribes and various spirits based on the Celtic mythos. The party had to specify the cold weather and climbing gear they they were taking — and, as a result, set off with a mule train, which cut down their movement and defence potential. They managed to play the various clans off against each other, but the forests presented real difficulty. Their journey was constantly interrupted by attacks from malevolent forest-spirits, operating under cover of night and trees, completely at home in their environment and, like Drow, very difficult to detect. As a result of these running battles, the party lost quite a lot of vital equipment before reaching the icefields that guarded the summit of the goal.

These are just two of the many terrain types the GM can use to create hassle and weaken the formidable striking power of experienced parties without escalating the monsters beyond reasonable proportion. If the GM can bring the terrain and weather to life and make them work for him or her, it can always give the adventure plenty of character.

The classic example of making a party look very silly indeed was a maritime journey a group of third to sixth level characters undertook through tropical, shark infested waters.

'An encounter with a large sea-monster put paid to our pathetic ship, and we were left in a leaky canoe a good hundred miles from any landfall. We had to repair the boat, rig an improvised sail out of part of the skirt of a female passenger, then navigate by the stars through treacherous coral reefs and shoals. The dangers of a second sea-monster attack now seemed vastly magnified and, as the GM gently reminded us, it ***was*** *the typhoon season. In the end, we came ashore on a white beach scarred by ribbons of black volcanic sand, with dense jungle behind.'*

In one simple encounter, the GM had managed to reduce a party of confident, powerful characters to a washed-out gaggle of castaways, at the same time giving them an exciting sea journey of a kind they never quite bargained for — one up to the GM!

Gordon Barbour

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

First on the agenda for April is TSR's own **GamesFair** at Reading University. This will take place from **12 noon on Friday 6th until 6.00pm on Sunday 8th April**, with a seminar led by Gary Gygax on Friday followed by a weekend filled with the usual attractions, including the Open Championship and Team Competition in the AD&D™ game. If you haven't already booked, it's too late! but watch out for full coverage in #15 of IMAGINE™ magazine.

Seacon takes place over Easter weekend **20 — 23 April** at the Brighton Metropole. Guests are billed as Roger Zelazny and Christopher Priest, among others, but contact organiser Pauline Morgan to check on details — 321 Sarehole Road, Hall Green, Birmingham, B28 0AL. Tickets £10.

We have news of a small convention for **Morrow Project** fanatics over the weekend of **28/29 April** in Walsall. There will be a small fee of about £4, not including accommodation. Full details are obtainable from Chris Harvey, Flying Buffalo, PO Box 100, Bath St, Walsall, W Midlands. Tel: 0922 28181

Tynecon II: The Mexicon will be in Newcastle from **25 to 28 May**, at the Royal Station Hotel, Newcastle upon Tyne. This convention will have a specific focus on written science fiction, with a single continuous programme, and, it is hoped by the organisers, a small, compact and friendly atmosphere. Attending membership is £5, accommodation costs from £13.25 per person. Contact Sue Williams, 19 Jesmond Dene Rd, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 3QT.

Finally, **Diplomacy** players: watch for more details of **Manorcon**, which will take place in Bristol on **13-16 July**, or write to Nick Kinzett, 11 Daleway Rd, Green Lane, Coventry.

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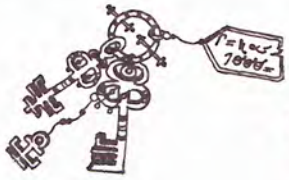


It seems strange at first, to play badly deliberately, but it's fun! And because the D&D® game is not competitive, you don't lose through 'bad' or foolish play in the way you would in other games.

A page for the not-so-experienced adventurer

by Roger Musson

The D&D game is not called a role-playing game for nothing. As mentioned in an earlier article, the great difference between a true role-playing game and a board game in which you 'take the part' of a character (as in **Cluedo**, for instance), is that in the former, most of the fun comes from developing your character into a real person. In the latter, the 'role' is just part of the game mechanics, and the object of the game is to win in some conventional way.

So if you are going to get the most out of playing this or any other role-playing game, it is important to try and play your character as though she or he were an independent person with particular traits and characteristics. This is usually called 'playing in character'. If one treats one's player character as a colourless puppet, performing only those actions that seem to the player as the most efficient in the circumstances, the result can be a rather dull game, no richer than the average computer adventure game.

The question is, how does one set about 'playing in character', when all you start off with is a set of statistics on a bit of paper? Well, for a start, those statistics tell something of a story in themselves, especially wisdom and intelligence. These immediately give you an idea of whether your character is wise or foolish, clever or stupid. If your character has a very low wisdom score, then play it that way! Have him continually putting his foot in it, or making obviously wrong decisions. It seems strange at first to those used to conventional games, to play badly deliberately, but it is fun. And because this is not a competitive game, you do not lose through 'bad' or foolish play in the way you would in other games. I must admit, though, that it is much easier to play a dumb character than to play a convincing genius character when one is not a genius oneself. But make a stab at it.

Charisma will have a small part to play, as well. Characters with high charisma will be used to adulation, and go around smooth-talking everyone. The ugly-pugs among player characters are more likely to be sullen and resentful.

Then something of the way a player character will develop will be inherent in their class, as well. Magicians are likely to be complex, solitary, intellectual characters, just through the nature of their profession. All that study and poring over dusty tomes is sure to leave its mark, and magician-types are likely to be some of the most unsociable characters around. On the other hand, a fighter may well be a much more simple soul, seeing the world in a straightforward way, in terms of issues that are clear-cut and can be decided as often as not by force of arms. A cleric's attitude to life will be shaped largely by religion (it's a good idea, by the way, to know what religion that is). This may lead in one of a number of different ways. One would expect a cleric who worshipped Odin to be a very different sort from one who followed in the ways of Bacchus. And as for the thief.... well, you don't need me to tell you what a shifty lot these usually are.

The same sort of analysis can be done for the various sub-classes — a barbarian, for instance, living in a civilised area, would have some difficulties in adapting to the different way of life. Also, non-human races in a human-oriented campaign may find themselves despised by humans, and develop an almighty chip on their shoulder.

Of great importance to how a player character will behave is alignment. Indeed, if players act out of character with respect to alignment, they may even be penalised by the dungeon master for doing so. Quite evidently, those who are Lawful Good do not go stabbing their comrades in the back. (On the other hand, wily evil players may conceivably perform insincerely good acts in order to hide their true nature until they can take best advantage of their comrades' defences being down. In such cases the DM should take a lenient attitude.)

But one can develop alignment a lot further. If one has a Good character, think of some 'good' attributes, and decide which ones are particularly evident in your character. Is he generous, kind, brave, pious, warm-hearted, or what? On the other hand, if he is Evil, just what sort of evil character does he have? Is he selfish, sadistic, vain, choleric, scheming or insincere?

Of course, you may pick on a few attributes that run counter to the main alignment of your character, just to make him a little more complex — one might even say, more human. A Lawful Good character may still be a coward, and could probably be conceited as well without infringing the alignment. An Evil Chaotic character can be as brave as the next person, and might even be soft-hearted, a villain with a heart of gold.

To character attributes derived from alignment, you might like to add a few personal foibles — fear of the dark, or extreme credulity, for instance. Things like this will flesh out your character into someone believable, who may become as real to you as a well-loved character from a book — provided, that is, that having decided what your character is like, you do truly play it that way.

Your character will not remain static, though. Progressing through a campaign, this 'person' will react and interact with both player characters and non player characters. As the young adventurer develops, experiences will leave their mark, maturity. And that is what a role-playing game is all about.

Roger Musson

If you have found this feature useful, you might be interested to read previous beginners' articles by Roger Musson. Back issues of ***IMAGINE*** *magazine can be obtained for £1 (+ 50p P&P) from TSR UK Ltd, The Mill, Rathmore Road, Cambridge CB1 4AD.*

Overhead, without any fuss, the stars were going out.

Meanwhile, the Cosmic Patrol's evening recruiting session was going well, with Cosmic Agent Mac Malsenn as its chief attraction. Malsenn was demonstrating the virtuosity of the trained Agent by juggling a dozen forty-pound sacks of thulium granules with his left hand, whilst his right operated the incredibly sensitive controls of the genetic manipulation device with which he was creating a hitherto unknown species of telepathic whelk. His voice was calm as he snapped out his moves in thirty-five simultaneous games of 4-D chess; his chained-together legs moved with uncanny precision as they negotiated the murderous lava pits and banana skins of the Stage 10 Commando Assault Course. He was, of course, blindfolded. The casual observer would perhaps not have realized that his thoughts were elsewhere.... dwelling upon the loveliness of his sweetheart, Laura, who had told him only that morning she was his betrothed. Malsenn had a notion that 'betrothed' meant 'pal', and he was elated.

Inspired by his performance, recruits jostled one another for the privilege of becoming a Cosmic Agent and killing all the alien life forms they wished. The basic entrance test was a simple mental and physical one devised by Malsenn himself. At the rear door of the recruiting station, endless queues of numb-brained invalids emerged to jostle feebly to be the top man on the high-piled stretchers. No pansies were allowed in the Cosmic Patrol, an organization so exclusive that Malsenn was invariably the only marcher at its great pageants and parades (giving envious ones the chance to murmur that he was out of step).

Suddenly the transceiver in Malsenn's left bicuspid began to ring. He gritted his teeth, accidentally turning on a wisdom tooth which immediately gave of its store of wise sayings such as 'Fast-spinning planetoids gather no moss' and 'Fine words butter no parsecs'. Meanwhile, his left canine was droning: 'This is a recorded message. The Cosmic Agent is otherwise engaged. Please speak your message at the third pip, at which time this mechanism will automatically ring off. **Pip**....'

'I know you're there, Malsenn!' It was the voice of Alkloyd, the Starfleet commander whose daring and initiative rivalled that of the sloth. Malsenn sighed, thrust his tongue into the *override* cavity of the transceiver tooth and, while dictating an unbroken stream of chess moves off one side of that same tongue, said with the other: 'I'm a bit busy now. Is it important?'

'Try looking up.'

Malsenn looked up. 'Black,' he said. 'Very.'

'Don't you see that overhead, without any fuss, the stars are going out?'

'One moment....' A single twitch of Malsenn's trained eyebrows converted the blindfold to a confetti of scorched cloth. '8/3 πr^3!!!' he swore. 'Good grief, Alkloyd, it seems that overhead, without any fuss....'

'I know, I know,' said the Commander in a hysterical shriek which sent Malsenn's tooth on edge. 'Now will you **do** something about it? Right up your street, I'd have thought. Can't stop now.... coffee time.'

Malsenn put on a burst of speed, dictating mates in two or three moves whilst tackling the final, lethal antimatter hoops of the obstacle course, and doing a rush job on the whelk genes which meant that the markings on the creature's shell — which he had intended should show the *Ode on a Grecian Urn* in exquisite calligraphy — would merely form a displeasing sanserif typescript of *Gunga Din*.

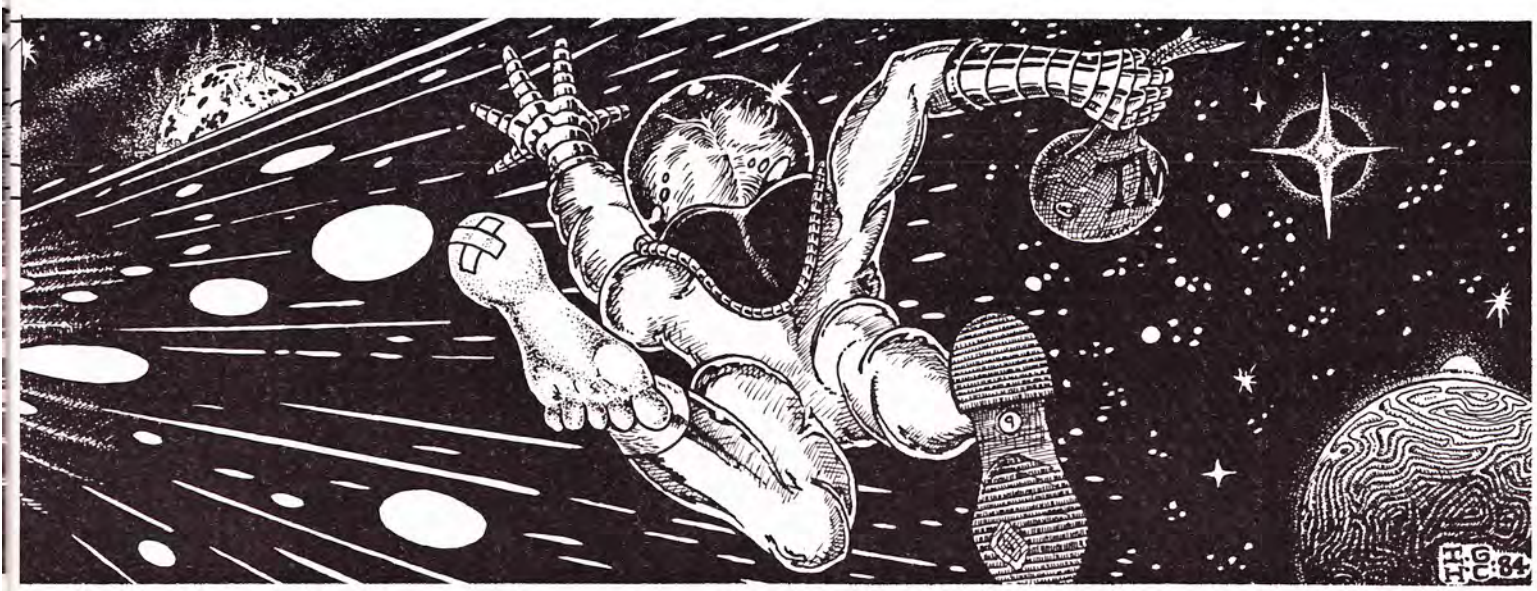
Bursting free from his chains, he ran for the spaceport so swiftly as to cause reports of curiously blurred, low-altitude UFOs. His tiny scoutship the *Star Vole* awaited him, fully armed with universe-busters of various sizes and fully fuelled with fuel. In less time than it takes to enter an airlock he had entered the airlock, dived for the controls and blasted clear of the solar system; only then, his concentration on duty momentarily relaxing, did he notice that his left hand was still juggling a dozen forty-pound sacks of thulium granules. He let them fall, and set a course for where Sirius had been before, overhead, without any fuss, it had gone out. As always, the *Star Vole*'s interstellar drive was based on an astonishing new principle devised by Malsenn whilst studying rubber models of Centaurian duckoids in his bath. The Axiomatic Drive was unusual in that at no time did it exceed the velocity of light; instead its counterlogical field redefined said velocity as being infinite (give or take a little), thus ensuring that there was no need to exceed it. A by-product of this axiomatic shift was that by Einstein's $E=mc^2$, infinite energy could now be extracted from a finite mass: the fusion of one hydrogen atom was adequate for any journey and left an infinite energy surplus which had to be stored in batteries.

Then the impossible happened. In a transition so swift that Malsenn's whole life was only able to flash before his eyes by playing several million frames per second, the bottom dropped out of the universe. In a moment, it dropped back in again, and the dazed Cosmic Agent found his environment totally changed. The *Star Vole* was no more; only one of the sacks of thulium granules was still with him in this strange, shimmering envelope of indefinable, yet inarguable, material. Through the glittering something he saw a dreadful leer and a terrible beard — a leer and a beard which could only be those of his old enemy — the satanic archfiend, connoisseur of megagenocide and critic: Nivek!

'Ha, ha!' said the evil one. 'We meet again, accursed Cosmic Agent! Little did you know of my Klein Bottle trap, an invention more satanic than dandruff. Little did you know that once you left Earth's protection, I could redefine space so that — although Klein bottles have no inside or outside — you would find yourself apparently within it! Little did you know....'

'Actually, I rather expected this and merely allowed myself to be trapped,' said Malsenn, unobtrusively hefting the sack of thulium granules. He had a hunch that it might be useful.

'Little did you know that in allowing yourself to be trapped you were in fact stepping into a trap,' said Nivek.



'Little do you know,' riposted Malsenn, 'that in allowing me to step into a trap you have stepped into a trap. Since if inside and outside are the same for this Klein bottle, I can readily redefine myself as being outside, thus leaving you trapped!' And with a mighty effort of will, Malsenn wrenched at the conceptual structure of what might loosely be termed reality. Spatial contiguity bent in several places with a rusty creak, and there was a terrible sound as though a number of red giants and white dwarves were engaging in disgusting perversions (which was in fact the case). The Klein bottle belched and everted itself, leaving Malsenn on the outside while Nivek stood within, helplessly trapped. Unfortunately, trapped inside with Nivek was the entire known universe.

'You did not think, my foolish adversary, that I would omit to seal the bottle with a conceptual plug?'

'All right, you fiend. You win this round, but the next hand will be mine when we cross swords again. No doubt it's you who is making the stars go out?'

There was a hideous rasping sound: Nivek was complacently stroking his beard. 'Yes. I require power sources and am thus enclosing 99% of all known suns in Dyson spheres in order to tap their energies. I shall then have sufficient energy on call to put an end to this rather mundane universe.'

Malsenn was aghast. 'Nivek, this is not like you. Why aren't you using the galaxy-draining power leeches you used to rely on? The nova generators? The planet-fired heating systems?'

'These days I'm into conservation,' said Nivek, and made a languid gesture. 'See that? Not many people can train Rigellian languids to make gestures like that.'

'Did it have to be a gesture like **that**? But, I say, how about if you gloat over me and reveal the ingenious way in which you intend to end the universe, so that I can, er.... be duly terrified.'

'Certainly not.'

'Nyahh nyahh nyahh, silly old Nivek doesn't have a plan!'

The evil overlord was wholly taken in by Malsenn's subtle psychological manipulation. 'I do I do I do!' he responded with Jesuitical cunning. 'My intention is to duplicate the entire universe!'

'Sounds a bit.... constructive,' said Malsenn dubiously.

'Ah, but the new universe, down to the tiniest particle, will occupy the same space as the old one. Bang.'

'Clever, fiendishly clever,' the Cosmic Agent admitted. 'But there is still the singular business of the singularity.'

'But there is no singularity in my plan.'

'That is what is so singular. You must realise that every plot contains a black hole or a singularity, these days.'

Nivek brightened. 'How convenient that you should suggest the means of your own disposal,' he shrieked happily. 'I have but to touch this button and you will be precipitated inexorably into the inescapable confines of a nearby singularity! Have you any last words?'

'I won't give you that satisfaction, you swine,' Malsenn rasped through clenched jaws.

Nivek wrote these words down in a volume whose cover bore the legend *LAST WORDS OF COSMIC AGENTS*: Malsenn at least had the satisfaction of seeing him make three attempts at spelling 'satisfaction'. Then the warlord touched the top button of his kaftan, and with a strange sensation of imploding bananas, the top, bottom and several sides dropped out of Malsenn's universe.

And at once he was inexorably falling towards a point in space whose immense warps and distortions made the starlight run in crazy patterns like a TV screen when the station closes or shows a political broadcast. There came a queasy sensation of space-sickness, caused by the surge and ebb of gravity waves. With desperate intuition Malsenn wrenched off his left boot and flung it to one side. The reaction force of this mighty throw diverted his plunge into the indecently naked singularity and thrust him into orbit. As he adjusted his pocket space helmet, he realised that he was still clutching the sack of thulium granules. The hunch that they would be useful was stronger than ever. But his mighty mind brooded helplessly for many hours as he circled — or to be precise, ellipsed — the point where space was going down the drain. Was there no chance of escape? Suddenly he recalled an article he had once read while passing through 1978 on business: an article explaining the irrational properties of singularities. It seemed that if you only waited long enough, then in due course anything at all would inevitably be emitted. This had not been checked, mainly because no-one had waited the necessary aeons.... but it seemed his only hope!

Removing the various microelectronic assemblies invariably built into his teeth and underwear, Malsenn set to work with his microtoolkit. Microscrewdrivers, microhacksaws, microsledgehammers, all were called into play as he painstakingly constructed an improvised suspended animation chamber, an improvised megabyte computer and an improvised pillow. Sooner or later, the random laws of chance must cause a replica of the *Star Vole* to be emitted from the singularity — and he had only to wait it out! He programmed the computer to watch for emitted Star Voles and for a certain other device.... and then pressed the switch that would throw him into trance through a vigil so long that his gene-shifted whelks would have time to evolve intelligence, take a good look round and hastily start devolving before the tiniest fraction of the time concerned had begun to approach the point of commencing to elapse.... And as he pressed the switch, Malsenn was smitten with a ghastly memory of a *Reviews of Modern Physics* he had paused to sneer at while passing through 1979 on his way back from business.

'Oh no,' he had time to think before oblivion fell upon him like a rice pudding from 30,000 feet.

10^{10} years passed. All the stars in the universe ran down and one or two very strange things popped out of the singularity. By around 10^{65} years, the first prediction of the remembered article came to pass: all matter flows like liquid on this vast timescale, and in a little while Malsenn, his computer and all his clothes had coalesced into a perfectly spherical

lump. By around 10^{1500} years, several more even stranger objects had zoomed past the lump as they fled the singularity — and the lump was now a lump of warmish iron, since on this timescale all matter is radioactive and decays to iron (it's amazing how much physics you can learn from the most appallingly written SF). It was a very long time afterwards that the unexpected occurred, as sooner or later it must. Through the workings of random chance, an artifact popped from the singularity, an artifact which might have been specifically designed to restore the lump which had been Malsenn to its former state. Unfortunately there was no-one to turn this artifact on, and it floated away until aeons later it was worshipped by a race of sentient whelks. Several more such misfires occurred until at last a *deus ex machina* emerged from the singularity in perfect working order, turned on, and pointing in the right direction. Instantly Malsenn was restored, and instantly his computer woke him, for amid the debris orbiting the singularity there were by now several Star Voles and two or three time machines, though these were almost hidden in vast shoals of variorum editions of Shakespeare in simian typescript. In no time at all, relatively (in fact it was a few weeks), Malsenn was on his way back to a confrontation with Nivek — armed with his ship, a time machine and a sackful of thulium granules.

Reality was wrenched in various incompatible directions as the time machine knotted worldlines into bowlines and sheepshanks; a spume of tiny black holes was released to disrupt the whole of recorded history (a certain furore was caused by one which landed in Calcutta). The fabric of space itself was folded, spiked, spindled, stapled and mutilated: what remained was worn and threadbare by the time Malsenn had finished with it, and from then on, it had to be handled very carefully.

'Not so fast! Not so fast, you fiend! Up against the wall! Don't touch that button!' So saying, Malsenn burst into Nivek's secret control room, cunningly located in the core of Betelgeuse and costing a fortune in air conditioning. It had taken even his trained mind fully ten minutes to deduce the location... 'Ha! Little did you know that a Cosmic Agent is never defeated! Little did you know that I should return to frustrate your foul schemes! Stay away from that button, now...'

Nivek smiled an awful smile, and the much-abused fabric of space/time gave a little shudder. 'Tee-hee,' he said.

'Why do you smile?' enquired Malsenn.

'I pushed the button several minutes ago.'

Malsenn rushed for the *Star Vole* and found his way blocked by an impassable neutronium door. All he had with which to save the universe was his trusty blaster, his slightly less trusty bag of thulium granules and the universe-buster grenade which hung at his belt. There stood Nivek beside his foul Klein bottle,

grinning and thinking eschatological thoughts.... Was this the very end? Already things were bulging and shimmering as the duplicate universe began to creep into being within their very withins. Only Malsenn was not being duplicated, having been absent at the start of the process. Suddenly he realised in a flash of realisation, as dazzling and unexpected as a tax rebate, that the solution lay within his very hands! It was the work of seconds to pull the pin of the universe-buster grenade, thrust it into Nivek's hand and swiftly conceptualize himself into the safety of the shimmering Klein bottle. Even as he pulled the plug in after him, the grenade burst with a muted **pop** and the universe was no more.

'It became necessary to destroy the universe in order to save it,' said Malsenn mournfully as the new scheme of things completed its unopposed journey into existence and began to regret it. The new Nivek, as stunned as the old by Malsenn's manoeuvre, was easily restrained after a brief struggle which destroyed the entire secret base and provoked a solar flare in the shape of an unusually vile Rigellian gesture.

Back on the new, improved Earth, Malsenn told the take of his cosmic exploits to the new edition of Laura (whose yawns of keen enthusiasm seemed much the same as ever).

'But why,' she said in puzzlement, 'are you still carrying that forty-pound sack of thulium granules?'

He gave an enigmatic smile. 'I just have this hunch that it's going to come in handy.'

Overhead, without any fuss, the stars were coming back on.

David Langford

'Nah, sorry mate...it's MORANME JOBSWURF'

a fun boardgame for 2 players
by Philip Briggs, with help from IMAGINE™ magazine.

Have you ever wondered what it's like, working for a games company like TSR, or what kind of people end up doing it? Well, take it from us, it's no bed of roses. One of the more gruelling aspects is the bitter inter-departmental rivalry, typified by squabbles over using the company biro, or access to a new tea bag every week.

So, if you want to get a taste of life at the bottom, this is your chance. **Moranme Jobswurf** is a game of skill and daring for two players, which recreates that most testing of all tasks, *passing the buck*. Have you got what it takes to be a successful backstabber? Could you betray your colleagues without a twinge of conscience? Play **Moranme Jobswurf**, and find out!

The Rules

Equipment:

One **Moranme Jobswurf** board (included in the centre of this magazine).
18 counters; 8 *sales* counters, 8 *publications* counters, and 2 *bucks* (cut these out from the panel beside the board).

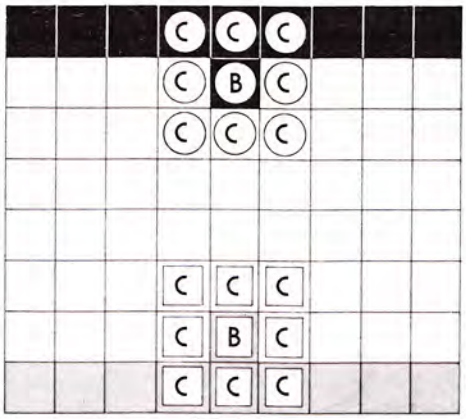
Dice or other items of equipment are not required.

Object:

To be the first player to transfer his or her *buck* into the other player's *in tray*.

Setting up:

Decide amicably (it's best to start off as friends) which player is going to be *sales* and which will be *publications*. Each player should then select the relevant *characters* for the office chosen; round chits for the *sales* team and square for *publications*. Don't forget to pick up the *buck*! Notice how the background of each player's buck cunningly matches one of the *in tray* areas on the board? Well, that shows who should sit where — both players should have their *in trays* in front of them. Now set up the board like this:-



The Scenario:

All the posh games have one or more of these nowadays; so shall we.

The two departments have just received separate memos.... and they are **very** embarrassing. Just what horrors are portended in these documents, only you can guess, but if the all-powerful Managing Director catches your department with one of these, it'll be curtains for everybody. There is only one way to save your bacon. You must get your memo — the *buck* — into the other player's *in tray*, and then call the boss and grass them up! Simple. So, just how do you do it?

Movement:

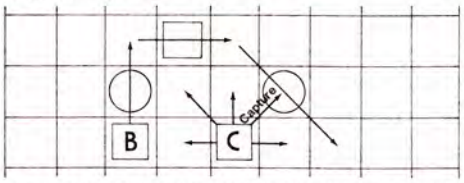
Decide who will move first. Now's a good time to get a bit more atmosphere into the game, so decide this by arm-wrestling, or by some more conventional (boring!) method like tossing a coin.

From now on both players will move alternately. The two types of counter — the *buck* and the *characters* — move differently, but three general rules apply:

1. A player may move one piece **only** in each turn.
2. Each completed move must result in a change of position for that counter.
3. On the completion of each move, not more than one piece can occupy the same square.

The Buck:

The *buck* is passed from character to character around the board. This is simulated by it jumping — draughts fashion — forwards, backwards, sideways or diagonally — over the character counters. The *buck* may be passed over *characters* of **either** side. Thus the following example:-



In order to be passed, the *buck* must start its move from an adjacent square to a *character*. It must be passed to the square directly opposite, and may only be moved thus if that square is unoccupied. There is no limit to the number of times a *buck* may be passed in one turn.

The *buck* cannot capture other counters, but must be passed to the opposing player's *in tray* to win the game.

The Characters:

Characters move 1 square at a time in any forward or sideward direction, into an unoccupied square. They may capture any of the opposing player's pieces by a forward, diagonal move — as a chess pawn. They may even capture the opposing player's *buck*, in which case the capturing player may place the *buck* on any unoccupied square on the board.

When a *character* counter reaches the opposing player's *in tray*, the counter may, at the owning player's discretion, be returned to anywhere within his own *in tray* area. This does not count as a move.

Winning:

As soon as the *buck has been passed into the opponent's in tray*, the player may call for the Boss, who will arrive on his or her **next** turn. If the Boss finds a *buck* in either *in tray*, that player has lost, and the other has won. If he finds *bucks* in both *in trays*, or in neither, the game is drawn.

ILLUMINATIONS

Games Centre Liquidated

One spin-off from the development of Adventure Games has been a parallel expansion of games shops. In the past there wasn't enough business to support more than three or four such shops in the whole country. Board games — **Monopoly, Scrabble** and others — sold well, along with traditional games — chess and draughts — but they were looked after in department stores and toy shops. Furthermore, they offered one-off purchases without follow-up business. Role-playing games changed all that. Rules expansions, figures, modules, paints, play aids and other bits and pieces provided retailers with a sound foundation for business. As further reinforcement to the viability of specialist games shops, closely allied items such as board wargames, specialist books and traditional games were smoothly assimilated into their stock. In recent years, computer games have been added.

The happy results of this convenient coincidence of development are well-stocked games shop in most major towns. These arrived during a period when most economic activity has been in the grip of severe recession. It is not without irony that now, just as we are being told that recession is easing, the signs are that all is not well. Last year the collapse of the Scottish chain **Games Gallery** left many suppliers with significant losses. Admittedly the **Games Master** chain, backed by Games Workshop, appeared in its place, but now there has been an even more dramatic casualty. **Games Centre**, boasting some of the biggest, most prestigious outlets in the country, with a head office and showpiece shop in Oxford Street, London, announced at the beginning of this year that they were going into receivership. This development was not exactly a surprise to most people in the business, but substantial amounts of money were still lost. Big companies in the games supply business are only small organisations in general terms; inevitably they will become more careful about who they supply.

It is a fact that both Games Gallery and Games Centre rapidly increased their retail outlets, Games Centre eventually having nine shops. It could be that this was the cause of their troubles — rapid expansion outstripped resources. Certainly there is no sign of wider-scale closures among games retailers, the majority of whom have one or two shops.

Meanwhile, we have the curiosity of central London devoid of a specialist games shop. It can be safely assumed that someone will step in quickly and it is fair to say that most people would bet on Games Workshop as the most likely contender. There is no need for Londoners to feel down in the meantime, however. There are many fine shops in the area of the capital only too happy to welcome ex-Games Centre customers.

Doug Cowie

Flextiles & other textiles

Flying Buffalo of Walsall have a number of new items available and I'm grateful to Jon Wesley-Smith for providing details. From Hero Games, they have received **Flextiles**. Floor plans of various types are well-established and many producers of these have also provided card furniture, statues, boats and trees to further enhance the effect. Flextiles are on these lines but are made of durable electrostatic plastic. They are designed for use with **Champions** but will be suitable for any system. Produced in 25mm scale, the range currently extends to four sets. Set 1 gives a variety of cars, trucks and motor cycles. Set 2 is called **Street Scenery** and has lamp posts, fire hydrants, news stands, phone booths and the like. In Set 3 we have **Laboratory Scenery** comprising computer banks, a giant dynamo, a forklift, pallets of crates and what are described as 'scientific gizmos'. Set 4 brings us back to nature with an assortment of trees, shrubs, hedges and... potted plants! All four sets are sold in zip-lock bags at £3.50 each.

Also from Hero come new Champions extras, **Enemies II & III**; **Escape from Stronghold** (adventure pack); and **Champions III**.

The 'Blade' division of Flying Buffalo have a new module suitable for both **Mercenaries, Spies & Private Eyes** and Hero Games' **Espionage**. Set on Savage Island in Lake Champlain and centred in and around the mansion of Stormhaven, this package offers a variety of adventures. As well as the usual maps, plans, stats and scenarios, Stormhaven contains 23 Cardboard Heroes designed exclusively for this module. Reviews of these two games systems will appear in a forthcoming IMAGINE™ magazine

Finally, Jon tells me that the PBM game **Feudal Lords** is doing 'phenomenally' well. Unlike the more common SF computer PBM games, this one has a medieval setting. Rules are 50p and each turn costs £1.00. Details from Flying Buffalo's sister company ICBM, PO Box 94, Bath St, Walsall.

Whimsical Machinations

There is a little bit of gentlemanly pushing and shoving going on over Grenadier Models' 'Official' 25mm **Traveller** figures. When they first appeared in the UK, marketed by Grenadier's agents Games of Liverpool, Games Workshop objected. Workshop are the UK agents of GDW, the producers of the Traveller game. As such, they have the option of producing 'Official' Traveller figures in Britain via their Citadel Miniatures subsidiary. So far they have made such figures in 15mm but not 25mm (you may like to go and make a cup of strong tea at this stage because this is where it gets complicated). GDW in the States, on behalf of GW, protested to Grenadier who decided that their licence from GDW precluded them from selling to the UK. They informed Games of Liverpool of this.

GoL, however, found that the Traveller figures were rather popular and so they were quite keen to sell them. Since they were not breaking any laws or agreements in doing so and since they are Grenadier's agents (and therefore wanted to be able to offer **all** their products), they made contact with another US company, not bound by any agreement or licence and therefore able to sell these highly contentious figures to the UK.

It so happens that your columnist works for Games of Liverpool and has been involved in these whimsical machinations. Furthermore, he can assure you that it's a lot more fun than many board games he's played. So far, his opposite number at Workshop, the urbane Peter Darvill-Evans, seems to have viewed the goings on in the same sporting light.

Should you chance to purchase any of these figures, spare a thought for those unsung desk-warriors and their unending campaigns through the post and over the telephone. It may all sound pretty pathetic to you but when you get right down to it... er, you're dead right!

Transatlantic Tales

A quick word about some TSR products arriving this spring. Most interesting is AC1 **The Shady Dragon Inn**, a D&D® game aid listing over 100 NPCs. It doesn't quite live up to the title, but is still a useful tool. There are no modules on release for any of the fantasy games, but there are new scenarios for many of the other game systems. Best-looking are TS005 and the TOP SECRET® character sheets, GW5 for the GAMMA WORLD® game and SF3 for the STAR FRONTIERS® game. Also, the much heralded SPI™ games are *en route*, as are the latest US magazines and more ENDLESS QUEST™ books. A full list of upcoming goodies in next month's issue.

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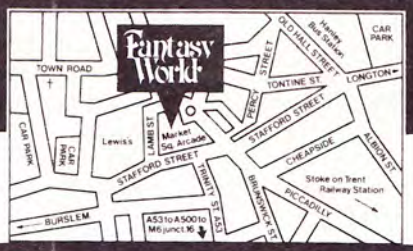
'Fantasy World' is open Monday to Saturday, 10.00 am till 5.30 pm and is easily located in the middle of Hanley city centre, at 10 Market Square Arcade. The entrance and escalator up to 'Fantasy World' is in Lamb Street, opposite Lewis's. Hanley Bus Station and Stoke-on-Trent Railway Station are just minutes away. If you are travelling by car, there are plenty of car parks available and junction 16 of the M6 Motorway is only 20 minutes away via the A53 and A500!



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Game Reviews

NO HONOUR IN SATHPORTE

The percentage of the total population that plays adventure games is probably very similar in Britain and the US. However, that means that the actual number of gamers in the States is far higher. Therefore, US game producers have a much bigger domestic market to sell their products to. This in part explains why most adventure games originate over there. It is pleasant to be able to report that several British companies are standing up to be counted. So far, much of their material is supplementary rather than new games systems.

Chaotic Intellect Products are a case in point. Their first product is **No Honour in Sathporte**, which is a fantasy role-playing scenario. Although I could find no reference anywhere in the booklet to the games system this scenario is intended to be used with, all the statistics are given in AD&D™ game form and an acknowledgement of TSR's trademarks on AD&D books is printed. It is thus a fair assumption that **Sathporte** is intended to be used as an AD&D scenario. Christopher Read, the author, gets very quickly into the meat of the adventure, and does not, for example, utilise the now standard scenario procedure of warning prospective players that they should not read descriptions intended for the referee. Nor is there any indication of the level and size of party the adventure is intended for.

However, any deficiencies in introductory material are more than made up for by the thoughtful provision of play aids. Most interesting is the novel inclusion of seven pages of 'geomorphs'. These provide cut-out plans of rooms from the various major areas in the adventure, and are intended to be used in conjunction with model figures. They are drawn to a scale of 1" = 5', and so are amply big enough for the job they are designed to do. Top marks for original thought here — people using model figures will certainly find that having a ready-made floor plan saves time appreciably during play. Another time-saver is having the statistics of important NPCs printed separately from the main text, forming an eight-page pullout which greatly facilitates speedy reference. There are also seven pages of blank NPC record forms — six to a page. Another neat little wheeze is a rather well-designed time-sheet which indicates the location of various NPCs at any given time of the day. The Sathporte package is completed by the main text of nearly 30 pages along with a separate card cover which carries clearly drawn plans of the principal locations detailed in the scenario. It can be seen that the publishers have not skimped on the quantity of material in their module but then, as they are asking £3.95 for a British product, we are justified in expecting something substantial.

The adventure itself is very good. It has a common enough central plot; the party is contracted to find and return the errant son of a rich woman. He has run away form his wealthy parents to fulfil some romantic notion of a life of adventure. Certainly this is by no means an original idea, but various twists and surprises have been incorporated into the scenario which makes it an interesting exercise which will severely punish players who do not keep their preparedness at a high level. It is always unfair to summarise a scenario, because even a brief outline may provide information that the players should not have, and thus impair their enjoyment. Suffice it to say, therefore, that the characters will have to locate and penetrate the HQ of the local thieves' guild in an attempt to fulfil their contract. It should be obvious that such an undertaking will be no milk run. It can also be said that the players cannot relax their guard until the referee closes the book and declares the adventure over.

TORTURED SOULS

The application of British creative talent to the production of role-playing scenarios continues apace and Beast Enterprises have broken new ground in their approach. Not content with merely designing a single adventure, they are offering no fewer than four for the incredible price of £1.95. **Tortured Souls** is an A4 size, magazine format, bi-monthly publication given over entirely to the presentation of complete role-playing modules. It is a great idea but of course it stands or falls on the quality of its adventures. #1 has four scenarios, all for the AD&D game, so let's take a closer look at what is on offer.

The Chevalier's Shrine is principally designed for inexperienced players and DMs. Modifications are provided so that more experienced players can be accommodated, but either way, low level characters are recommended. Of the three standard scenarios in issue 1 (the fourth is a solo adventure) **Shrine** is my favourite. The subject matter is most original and a very effervescent evening's entertainment should result. There is a nice mixture of danger and amusement which will keep players involved as they strive to clear up the mystery of the strange goings-on in the temple of the Chevalier's Shrine. Certainly, if some of the rumours concerning the place and its attendant clerics are true, something very odd is afoot. In common with the other scenarios in TS, **Shrine** is pleasantly written without that infuriating overblown pomposity so often found in US products. Equally, the temptation to indulge in toe-curling 'clever' humour is largely resisted — an example that, regrettably, all too many British publications need to follow. An interesting innovation in this scenario is the use of a commercially produced set of Dungeon Floor Plans in making the ref's map of the temple in which the action occurs. This is printed in full colour, at a reduced size from the original, and provides a most attractive plan. Unfortunately it is not keyed (apart from room numbers). Although the necessary information can be gleaned from the text, a map key would be useful.

Little details of good design technique crop up throughout all the scenarios. For example, on occasions when a difficult patch of play is likely to arise, the text helpfully refers the DM to the page in the **DMG** which will help to adjudicate in the event of problems. There are also explanations of exactly what happens when a player fails, say, a 'move silently' roll in a particular circumstance. Small points, but evidence of care in design.

The other two ref-moderated scenarios in issue 1 are printed on distinctive coloured paper and are designed to be removed from the main body. This is because they form part of a complete campaign, details of which are promised in future issues. These scenarios can also be played as one-off adventures by those not interested in getting involved in the whole campaign.

Tomb of Qadir is for middle level characters and experienced players. They

Distributors' names are given for information only

Chaotic Intellect have put together a good product in Sathporte. The adventure is interesting and challenging, and the various play aids provided show some originality as well as being useful. I think a little more could have been done to provide the DM with some pre-play advice about running the adventure and the size and strength of a suitable party. Finally, the layout could be a bit slicker, perhaps using the system pioneered by TSR which clearly delineates in the text information that the DM should give the players from that which should not be divulged.

I look forward to more Chaotic Intellect products, perhaps for systems other than the AD&D game. ***Doug Cowie***

No Honour at Sathporte *(£3.95) is available from Chaotic Intellect, based at Southcourt, Orient Drive, Harestock, Winchester, Hampshire SO22 6NZ.*

CHIVALRY & SORCERY (2nd Edition)

Game Reviews

In the beginning was the D&D® game, and the D&D game was alone, and all was good. Then came the imitators and developments of the game — necessary because, let's face it, the original game was a mess. The first three FRP games to follow were **Arduin Grimoire, Tunnels & Trolls** and **Chivalry & Sorcery**. The latter quickly established a reputation of extreme detail and complexity for itself, exemplified by the infamous 'Trout tickling' rules. It was adopted by a small minority who found its attention to detail and firm grounding in the Feudal Age to their taste — the majority, however, spurned it as incomprehensible and unplayable.

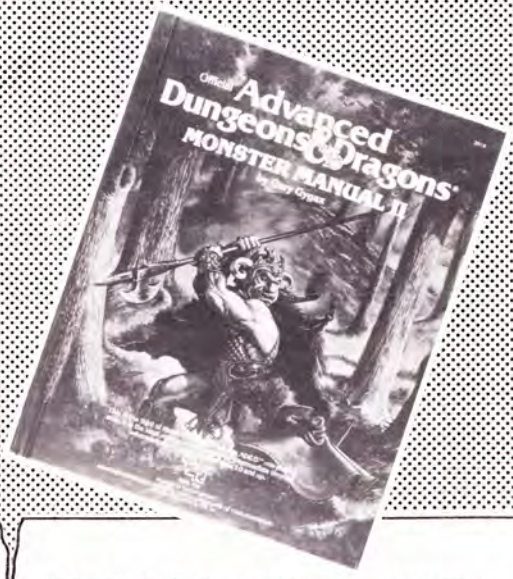
Now, however, C&S returns in an extensively rewritten form. The game has moved with the times, and the only problem is that so has the FRP hobby.

Where once a d20 was rolled to generate character requirements, now progressive 'allocative' systems are used. Combat has similarly benefitted from Role-gaming advancements since 1977 — the archaic method of rolling 'to hit' an armour class has been dropped, and replaced by the more commonly used method of armour absorbing damage. A skills system has been grafted onto the rules, and sits uneasily in the company of a level-based experience system.

Presentation has also been improved since the first edition. There are still a few glitches — initial social status is poorly explained, and the Magic system (unchanged from the first edition), the rules major selling point, contain frequent references to first edition rules that have since been phased out.

Chivalry & Sorcery mistakenly attempts to compete with the AD&D game in terms of detail — a hopeless task which can only produce a fragmented and complex set of rules. As a reference work, and as a source of ideas for incorporation into other games, Chivalry & Sorcery is still excellent, but I doubt it will shake its popular image as a cult game on the fringes of the hobby mainstream. ***Paul Mason***

Chivalry & Sorcery *is available as a boxed set, price £13.95, and there are numerous accessories. Enquiries should be made to Games of Liverpool, 89 Victoria St, Liverpool L1 6DG.*



are faced by an ominous old temple, beneath which lies a sinister tomb. Problem: a rapacious band of goblins has occupied the temple. No particular adventure is provided here. The module is all details: NPCs, detailed locations, daily routines, treasure. The DM uses this information to create an adventure. Normally I object strongly to commercially produced modules that expect the purchaser to do a lot of leg work. However, I think in this case it is not unreasonable, considering the outstanding value that Tortured Souls represents.

The Rising Tower is a module for higher level characters. The action is limited to the environs of an old fortified tower, but there is much variety to the encounters therein. **Tower**, unlike **Tomb**, is fully worked out for the DM. I was unable to play through this adventure, but it certainly looks well up to standard.

In the introduction to issue 1, the editor tells us that the originals of the artwork are for sale. 'Our own piece of history,' he suggests. Well, it's your money, but the standard of the artwork is not THAT good. In fact it is distinctly average — certainly below par when compared with the high standard of the rest of the publication. I'm referring here to the illustrations only. The maps and plans are in every way satisfactory, apart from the lack of a proper key in the map for **Shrine** mentioned earlier. Due to the necessity of keeping the price down (I assume), there are less maps and play aids than one has become accustomed to in commercial modules. In **Shrine**, for example, the location of the temple in relation to the rest of the town is not mapped. 'Make it up yourself,' advises the designer.

The final scenario, **The Crystal Keys**, is a solo adventure. In scope and detail it outstrips anything else I've seen before. I'm afraid it makes the familiar **Tunnels & Trolls** solos look positively anaemic by comparison, although it does use the same numbered paragraph system. The player has a complete party of 5-7 characters. These can be thieves, clerics, fighters or MUs and can be human, elf or dwarf. Quite a choice for a solo. The action has both wilderness and dungeon locations. Players produce a map as they progress, using a neat generation system. This is a very good solo.

Tortured Souls represents amazing value. The quantity of material for the money makes it a recommended purchase. The quality of that material makes it an essential purchase. My only worry is — can they possibly keep it up issue after issue?
(PS: I have just seen issue 2, and I must say that the quality seems to have been maintained and the physical components are improved in that the covers are now thin card rather than thick paper. Issue 2 contains four ref's scenarios and one solo — all for the AD&D game. After a quick scan, I would say that it looks like another good issue.)

Doug Cowie

Tortured Souls *is published by Beast Enterprises, Divinity Road, Oxford OX4 1LR, at £4.95 for three issue, post free.*

These games are available from hobby shops.

Game Reviews

MONSTER MANUAL 2

Monster Manual 2, by Gary Gygax, is a 160-page, hard-backed book. It is physically strong, which is just as well since most copies of it will have to withstand the punishment which frequent (and frantic) use demands. This book is, of course, part of the AD&D™ role-playing game system. One part of this system is the **Monster Manual**, and Monster Manual 2 is the second volume of what we may call the encyclopedia of monsters. It is important to realise that this new book is **not** a second edition of the original book, but a second volume to be used in addition to MM1. A possible confusion may arise from the fact that MM1 has just been reissued with a new cover — so be careful.

Since it is not a successor to MM1, comparisons between the two are not really relevant. However, it is impossible not to remark on one improvement. A cover has an immediate effect on anyone considering a book, yet the old cover on MM1 was universally held to be appalling; the childish style of its illustration may have seriously hampered the development of RPGs as adult games. Thankfully, TSR have not fallen into the same trap again — MM2 has much better cover art. It's not great, but it is certainly good.

The monsters in MM2 are all different to those in volume 1, of course. Some categories from the first book, such as demons, lycanthropes, dragons and giants, are expanded in MM2. There are also numerous monsters that have appeared before in magazines, and there are many completely new monsters.

The layout of this book is broadly similar to that of its companion. Each monster class has a listing of its general status, including such things as armour class, movement, etc. There is a useful addition, namely the inclusion of the monster's level and xp value. Following this list comes a passage giving the monster's physical description, notes on its habitat, behaviour patterns, and any unusual features. Many of the monsters are illustrated, which greatly helps the reader's comprehension of the creature.

Most of the book, which is about 50% longer than MM1, is taken up by these monster descriptions. However, the rest is not to be despised. There is a fine index, listing all 'Official' monsters for the Advanced game (as of December 1982), from MM1, MM2 and the **FIEND FOLIO®** Tome. Some very useful lists show (for example) dungeon dwellers by level and frequency, while for outdoor campaigns there is a similar table of monsters by terrain and frequency. There are also several pages of random encounter tables and notes on how to create such tables for yourself.

So there we have it. It will certainly sell in huge quantities. Monsters in great variety and profusion seem to be the cornerstone of the AD&D game, so a book crammed full of them will be seized eagerly by DMs desperate for more spice in their games. This book does what it sets out to do, does it well, and therefore must be considered a success. If you like the AD&D game, go and buy it immediately (if you haven't already). If you don't like the system, avoid it as greenfly avoid gardeners.

It has certainly furthered my education. Previously, if anyone had told me that I could find all the necessary details of a Gibbering Mouther on page 69 of an official encyclopedia, I would have politely tapped them on the head with a nightstick and summoned para-medical assistance. But there it is! Upon inspection, we find that the Gibbering Mouther is evidently based upon quite a common class of role-player — *'the Gibbering Mouther is an amoeboid-like form of life, composed of all mouth and eyes. Its favourite tactic is to lie in wait with mouth and eyes shut, so it appears to be a lump of earthy material.'* How many times have I seen that on the other side of the table? *'The brain of a Mouther is located in its midportion, and its gelatinous-like body makes it difficult to strike this one vital spot.'*

Although some monsters appear to be just plain silly, it must be said that they are well presented, properly thought out and adequately described. They will work well within the Advanced system, and some of them, such as the dragons and devils, make interesting reading even for non gaming enthusiasts.

Doug Cowie

*TSR's **Monster Manual 2** costs £8.95*

CALAMITY!

There are some games you like on sight, and **Calamity!** is one of them; a well laid out folding board made of thick card, a solid playing piece, readable dice, clearly printed cards and currency, and simple yet comprehensive rules — and fun to play as well!

The object of the game is simple; make lots of money and try to bankrupt your opponents in the tricky world of insurance. The game is for 2-6 players.

The board is rectangular with an outside track divided into 52 squares or weeks in the year, 13 to each quarter. At the beginning of the year, policies cost nothing and risks are few, but as the year progresses, risks and value increase together, and only at the end of each circuit or year are the premiums on those policies still in force paid to the insurers (players) who own them. The game runs for two circuits and the winner is the player with the most cash.

The set-up is easy, but it is here that the only major criticism comes: there isn't enough currency of the correct denominations to set up the 5 or 6 player game. A letter to Games Workshop swiftly yielded another set of notes, but as these were in the same quantities as before, it would appear that the lack of cash is a general rather than an isolated error. Pity! I would have thought that GW were more organised than to spoil the presentation of an otherwise excellent game in that way. Never mind, you can always write to them for more currency; they should be properly chastened after the first few hundred!

Movement is by cards, numbered from 1 to 5, dealt to the players in the set up together with £1,500,000 cash; the pack gives exactly one circuit of the board and there is a redeal at the end of the first year. The method for deciding whether a policy of a certain type (Low, Medium, High or Very High Risk) pays out is both novel and clever. When the playing piece lands on a certain type of risk, the players have the option of off-loading some or all of their policies of that type onto the bank, but it costs them £20,000 per policy; one die is then thrown and matched against the rows of a 6 x 6 grid. The players compare the grid with the one printed on their policies and again have the option of off-loading onto the bank, but this time it costs them £100,000 per policy. The second die is thrown and compared with the columns on the grid and thus an individual square is indicated. If this square is coloured in on any of the relevant policies, it costs £200,000 per policy involved; of course, the higher the risk, the greater the number of squares coloured in on the policy. Clever! and certainly not for those of a nervous disposition! It is interesting to see who crumbles and bails out and who sticks and perhaps escapes or gets wiped out. Some special squares indicate different advantages and actions, the worst of which must be the 'San Francisco Earthquake' which affects **all** kinds of policy, and without the advantage of off-loading! This can force players to sell all their policies in order to pay off the claims, but it also means that the player who moved to that square has (presumably!) already sold out and is in no position to claim premiums at the end of the year.

This is an easy game to learn but requires skill and experience to win in a convincing fashion. At £7.50, it's a real bargain! ***J C Connor***

***Calamity!** is produced by, Games Workshop, 27/29, Sunbeam Road, London, NW10 6JP, price £7.50.*

Distributors' names are given for information only.

These games are available from hobby shops.

CHAIN MAIL by Brian Creese

A bi-monthly feature about the postal gaming hobby

SOCCERLEAGUE

'...there was an unexpected result here at the Mill ground today when lowly TSR United humbled mighty Tolkien Wanderers in a manner which belied their respective league positions. A crowd of 18,000 saw Cockburn open the scoring in the 17th minute. Wanderers replied with a superb solo goal from Frodo a minute from the break. The second half saw TSR strengthen their grip on the game and Turnbull scored the decisive goal on the hour. TSR continued to dominate the closing stages of the game and Wanderers' chances of saving the match virtually disappeared when Sauron was sent off 10 minutes before time...'

Unsurprisingly, there have been many popular football games invented over the years, but if intellectual skill is more your forté than the fingertip control of Subbuteo, then one of the Soccer Management games is probably for you, and you could soon be running one of the teams in my spoof report above.

It would cause an instant argument to suggest that Soccerleague games represent true role-playing. However, in terms of decisions to be made, some of these games come very close to simulating a manager's position; how closely depends on the exact game you join.

It would be an exaggeration to say that no-one knows who invented the Soccer Management game — but I certainly have no idea. Originally known as **Soccerboss**, more recently **Soccerleague**, and closely related to **United**, all these games put you in the position of running a football club. Accordingly you have not only to put together a winning team, but also look after the entire finances of the club; deciding the tactics for Saturday's match constitutes only a small part of the game.

The elements of these games are broadly similar. In the beginning you have an amount of money. This has to be used to equip the club with stands, trainers, scouts, physios and players, each of varying levels of skill and potential. It is important to remember that these starting conditions will be with you for the entire game (which could be a long time) so initial decisions are very important.

The week-by-week decisions are rather more fundamental than picking the team. Firstly there is an auction of new players whom you may bid for. Players have both a current skill and a potential. To reach a skill close to a player's true potential will need constant attention, and decisions will be particularly difficult if your club is not commanding the sort of crowds that generate lots of income.

Finally there is a matter of the game itself. Each league running has different rules, but most are sufficiently sophisticated to produce a report such as that at the start of this column. They will allow for different formations, alternative tactics and even an amount of deliberate clogging! There are chances of injury as well as sendings-off and bookings, and sufficient chance to allow for the occasional surprise result.

While the immediate aim of the manager must be to end the season at the top of the league, it is also important in these recessionary days to be financially solvent. Heading the league is no good if bankruptcy threatens! A long-term view is required if you are to be successful in these games.

Not only will your team have to compete in a league — and if there are several divisions there will be promotion and relegation to consider — but there will probably be a cup competition as well. Then there may be an inter-league competition when you play teams from other zines and maybe even an international to look forward to...

While what I have written probably applies to most United or Soccerleagues currently running, all such leagues have highly individual rules which may cover more or less than I have set out here; game mechanics will vary, United rules being a good deal more straightforward than the traditional leagues. If you are lucky you may get the opportunity to be in a new game just starting up, but more usually you will have to join a waiting list, waiting for your chance to take over a manager's role when that player drops out for some reason. In such circumstances you will be once again in something of a role-playing situation, having no choice of stand sizes or even playing pool. You must just make the most of what you have!

Soccerleague games are very popular, and there are something like 12 leagues currently running. As it will probably be necessary to wait some time to get into an established game, it is worthwhile doing a little bit of research into the different styles of play before committing yourself to a game. I can do no more than once again suggest that you obtain a copy of **20 Years On** which lists all such games. You can then write to the various GMs of the games asking them for a copy of their rules, and decide which game suits you.

And if that is what you decide to do, good luck — and I hope you get an understanding chairman!

Brian Creese

***20 Years On** costs 35p and is available from Simon Billenness, 20 Winifred Road, Coulsdon, Surrey CR3 3JA.*

Letters

*This page is full of the accumulated wisdom of gamers up and down the country, where they have written to **IMAGINE**™ magazine (letters), The Mill, Rathmore Road, CAMBRIDGE CB1 4AD. Letters appearing here may have been edited for length.*

Now, this is the sort of letter we like to get. None of your orc's hit points here, oh no. Only those with intelligence over 17 need read on.

Don Pavey, Art Arena Games, London: I have thoroughly enjoyed reading the magazine; I hope you will forgive me if my comments are vast generalizations.

It occurs to me that if you are taking the grand open-minded philosophical view that you seem to be (even the concept of rules is open to question), this leaves some special channels open for further investigation.

Isn't it the scenario that first hooks the potential gamer? Marvellous contrasting illustrations from totally different game worlds would be stunning. Who knows what psychological symbolism the games conjure up in players?

As in the classic concept of 'dream-work' of Freud, the scenario of a game involves particularly the first and second processes of dreamwork, namely the *Dramatisation of Emotion* (the game has a tone and character of its own, from cold intellectual to firey volcanic) and *Secondary Elaboration* (the constellations of possibilities in the game universe often centre around some hidden or inconspicuous detail); whereas the third and fourth processes are metamorphic (*Displacement* & *Condensation*).

We can't really do justice to Don's letter here, since he went into this much deeper. Just goes to show, though, that there's more to orcs' hit points than meets the eye. Maybe we'll ask Don to expand on this theme sometime.... maybe when we've bought a new dictionary. And Don isn't the only genius who reads IMAGINE magazine

Mike Dean, Fife: Me like IMAGINE™, IMAGINE™ good. IMAGINE™ get better & better. Me think IMAGINE™ best RPG magazine around!

I apologise for Mike, he's a fanzine editor. I have tried to warn you in the past about what that can do.

We had more reponse to our Christmas issue, #9, than to any issue since the first. Mostly good, too.

Antony Jones, London: Cantrips are quite useless — printing only three of them would show gamers how to invent their own. Do **cough**, **blink** and **groan** need a paragraph of their own? Surely the name explains it all?

How did he get in here?

Paul Mason, Coventry: Half of the Cantrips appear to be more useful than 1st level spells, and, in my opinion, take the trivialization of magic a stage further.

*OK.... The response to **most** of the issue was pretty good:*

Jeremy Nuttall, Cheshire: The Purple Parrot — Wow! This is what we want. Perhaps you could print more stories like this, they help get my brain into gear before DMing.

*Where do we find these people? Let's get back to the relative calm of Rules vs Play, and more recent attempts to turn this into **Runequest** vs the **D&D**® game.*

Hamish Paterson, Durban, S Africa: Most of the so-called inconsistencies in the D&D and AD&D game can be dealt with by a competent DM. I cannot say the same of other games. Most of the **RQ** inconsistencies are not brought out — and why? Because it is not played so much?

Paul Mason: The lack of **RQ** material in IMAGINE magazine does not say anything about its popularity. I would guess that if you only consider people who have been playing a year, RQ would outsell the D&D game.

*And you'd be wrong. I include these letters as an example of the way mention of these two games seems to cause more polarised opinion than a Party Political Broadcast. Perhaps I'd better go on the record again and say that IMAGINE magazine exists to serve the players of all varieties of adventure games, but that we recognise that there is one game that outsells all others umpteenfold. I hope to be able to announce, however, that we will be doing a **Runequest** special for the rest of you frustrated players soon.*

Jamie Revell, Northumberland: One criticism I often hear about the Basic game is the low survival rate. Lew Pulsipher seems to think that this promotes role-playing, though I don't follow his argument. Mike Brunton showed a certain naivety too, in believing that the new classes and the cantrips promote better play. The barbarian will be used as a strong fighter, the cavalier the same.

*Chris Felton's article on **Phantasmal Forces** was widely praised, though it provoked various additional ideas:*

Jamie Revell: I disagree with Chris about the two day study period. I think an illusionist would be able to create an illusion of anything seen fairly close up, though some preparation for the spell would be required in which the caster visualised the desired item, effectively increasing casting time. The thought of watching a lesser-spotted greebly walk, run, jump, crawl, brachiate, roll and breaststroke for two days doesn't fill me with much excitement.

Pete Tamlyn, Bucks: One point that Chris didn't bring out very well in **Phantasmal Forces** is that a successful illusion involves deception of a number of senses, not simply the visual. This allows the GM to cut down the effectiveness of the spell, and allows for a great deal of interest to be generated. Simply split the PF spell into five, one for each sense, allow higher level spells to defeat a number of senses. Players will have to think much more about an illusion, since a simple visual illusion can be very effective indeed provided that the victim is a long way off, while a dog would never be deceived with an illusion that did not include smell.

*Clearly there are a great many solutions to the problem of the PF spell already in use. If you have one, why not drop us a line, and we'll print the best ideas. Many of you, I know, found Chris Felton's article very helpful, and I'm glad to say that another of his articles, on **Enchantment**, can be found on page 36 of this magazine.*

*Much comment has continued to filter through about the **DRAGONQUEST**™ game. Many of you devoted DQ fans enjoyed our #7 a great deal, and various rumours concerning the future of the game have added fuel to your letters.*

Jamie Revell: DQ is too restrictive for my liking — no, Mr Kern, the same is not true of the AD&D™ game.

Duncan Harris, Avon: It says in the **DQ** rules 'the object of an RPG is not for an individual to win.... but to enjoy a stimulating interchange between the players and GM'. In other words, it must be fun. DQ tries to encourage role-playing rather than fighting ('fighting is a deadly process and should be avoided if at all possible').

For now, TSR Inc have no plans to expand or provide new material for this game system, which seems to be much more popular in Britain than it is in the USA. However, knowing how many of you do have a soft spot for this game, IMAGINE magazine will continue to publish occasional articles and scenarios, and I hope that Robert Kern will be available to pen something else before long.

*One last word. Jeremy Nuttall and others berated us for the way the **Transatlantic Tales** section of the **Illuminations** page is often inaccurate. Well, strange as it may seem, we **don't** always know what is happening with our parent company, particularly working 2 months ahead of the time the news appears! Bear with us –we'll get it right one day.*

Letters edited by Paul Cockburn

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CRASIMOFF'S WORLD

POSTAL GAME

Crasimoff's World is a fantasy game of exploration and adventure. As a player you assume the role of chieftain in a band of brave adventurers set on gaining knowledge and power. You must create a party of nine fellow travellers, from three character classes (fighter, mage and priest) to assist your chieftain.

Your party will set out from a small town, knowing nothing about the world apart from a few rumours. As you travel you will learn more about the land and its secrets, encountering other parties, races and creatures. There are tokens detailing magic items, spells, creatures, gods, money and many more things that you will discover later in the game.

'KJC Games has been running Crasimoff's World for over a year now, and the effort the gamesmaster puts into each turn never ceases to amaze me. Most players find themselves offered a different scenario each turn, or find that a new twist has happened to an existing adventure.'

as reviewed in

WHITE DWARF Nº 37

If you wish to enrol in Crasimoff's world send a £5 cheque/P.O. payable to K.J.C. Games. For this you will receive a rulebook, set up material, and the first four rounds. Future rounds are £1.25 each. Copies of the White Dwarf review are available free of charge from K.J.C. Games.

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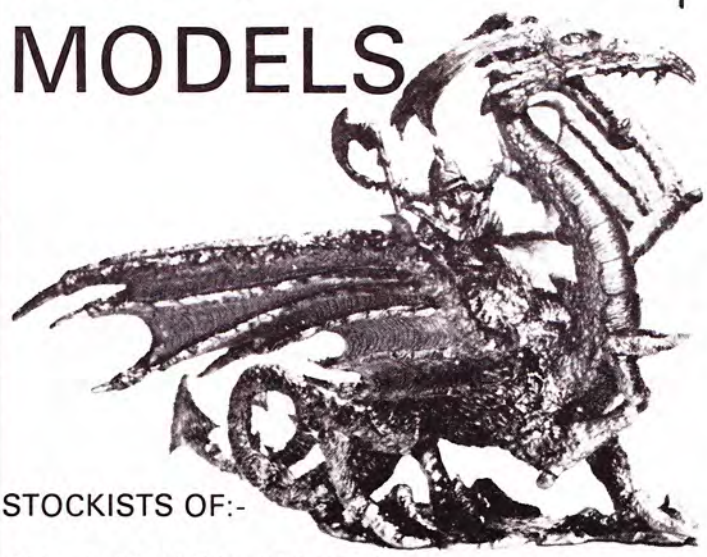

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Settling Down

The home computer hobby in the UK is now around five years old. It has certainly been a chaotic five years, but it looks as if things are stabilising and the future becoming a little more predictable.

One reason for this, sadly, is the simplification of the situation caused by the disappearance of so many hardware and software companies. On the hardware side, it now appears that 1983 was the last chance for a brand new eight-bit micro to establish itself as a significant contender in the market. Machines such as the Aquarius did not sell fast enough to establish a significant market share, from which it followed that the software houses were not prepared to spend time rewriting their programs for it. A steady stream of sales over a long period might have improved the machine's chances, but the Aquarius had spent so much time on the drawing board that it already looked obsolete when it was launched. So the proliferation of different and incompatible machines ceased to give the software companies headaches; by the expedient of ruling out any micro that did not already have at least 15% of the market, they cut down the number of machines to a manageable size.

Fast-action games

Similarly, many of the small software companies that made their mark in the early years disappeared or became dormant; those who tried to expand in size did particularly badly. All the demand was for fast-action games, and the assets of such a company were really just the number of competent machine-code programmers it could employ. Unfortunately, these talented gentlemen showed a continuing tendency to leave their employers and set up their own small software houses.

A further simplification came about because of the continuing success story of the Spectrum, which now accounts for at least 50% of home computer sales in the UK. This makes it almost inevitable that any new piece of games software will be written first of all for this machine, then rewritten to run on a maximum of three or four other computers. As a result, new software tends more and more to be tailored to fit the capabilities and limitations of this micro.

Rehashed Software

Software prices also stabilised; there was a time when you might be asked to pay anything from £2 (for a ZX81 tape) to £40 for a cartridge or disc for one of the American computers. But the poor performance of the cartridge software market, coupled with the relative failure of the American machines, tended to make the higher prices more and more of a rarity. At the same time, it became uneconomic to charge anything under £4.50 or so for a games cassette. There are several reasons for this; one is the shift from mail order to retail sales, which introduced middlemen (distributors) eager to take their cut from the selling price of each item. Another was the trend towards expensive packaging, found necessary by each software house if it was to sell its products against those of its competitors. This in turn was due to a large extent to the nearly identical nature of much of the software on the market, consisting mostly of rehashes of old arcade themes.

The disappearance from the newsagents' shelves of most of the magazine titles launched in the last two years is also a welcome clarification of a confused position. Many of these titles continue, but on a subscription or controlled-circulation basis. In the former category are most of the machine-specific publications dedicated to the less popular micros. The latter category includes magazines which are really aimed at the business side of the market and would never normally be found in a retail outlet at all. They seem to have flourished during a short period in which large numbers of business executives were spending the firm's petty cash on desktop computers, but had not yet got onto the mailing lists of the business machine and accessory suppliers.

The final simplifying trend was in the type of computer user. It seems that the great majority of computer buyers (or recipients of presents) during the Christmas sales period were boys in the 10-12 age range, mostly choosing the Spectrum or the Vic-20 starter pack. Leisure interests among other age groups appear to be oriented in quite different directions. One can expect the type and level of complexity of games software produced during this year to be matched more and more to this dominant age group.

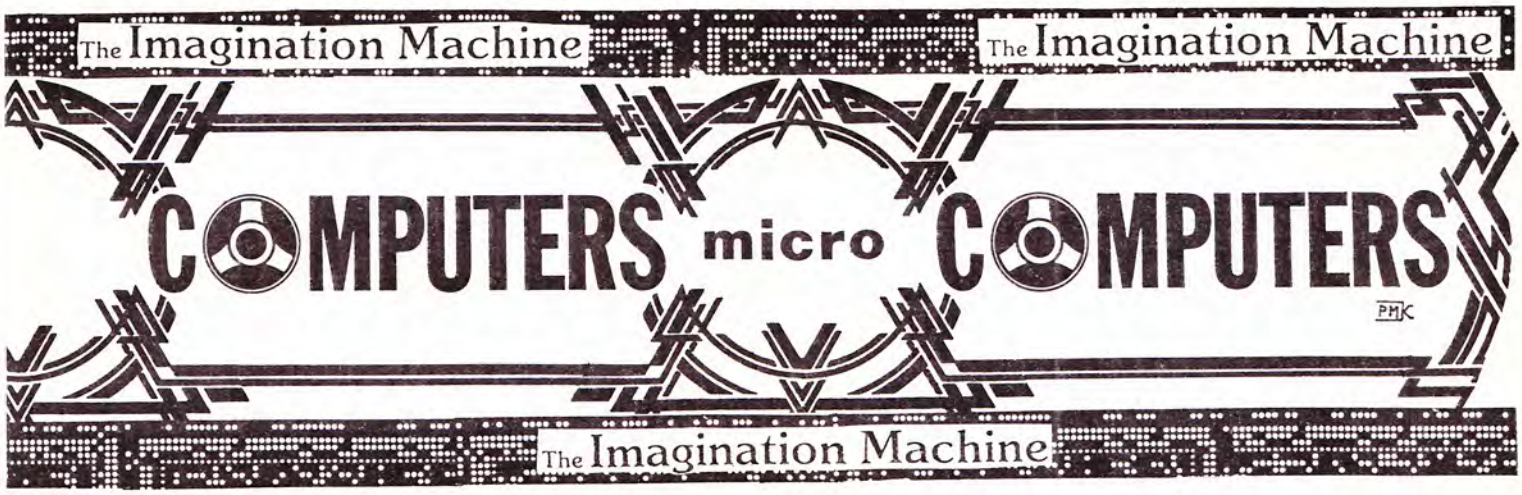
Looking at Trends

So what does all this mean for the development of the industry during the present year? Several tendencies are already apparent; the disappearance of the small retail outlets who cannot compete with the big retail chains in the home computer market; the migration of many suppliers to the business computer market, where margins are less tight and competition is slacker.

I suspect that in due course the sheer size of the current market will cause the wheel to come full circle. If you have a specialised games software product which will appeal to not more than .5% of potential buyers, you are not going to find an impressive number of takers among a population of, say, 50,000 owners of a particular micro. But now that there are a million Spectrums, you could achieve reasonable sales with such a minority-interest game, provided you were prepared to write for this particular machine. At the same time, maximum sales of 5,000 are not really enough to interest the distributors who move the software from the producers to the shops.

So we may see a greater variety of games software becoming available in future, including more original game designs than those being produced by the established software houses. But this material will tend to be sold partly or wholly as a mail-order operation — just as in the old days of 1979 to 1981. And if that happens, this specialist area of computer gaming will come more and more to resemble the characteristics of the existing gaming hobby.

Mike Costello



Game Reviews

GROUCHO for the ZX Spectrum

Groucho is a follow-up to **Pimania** from Automata UK Ltd. For £10 you get the cassette, an outline of the game, a song and a cigar! The song, 'Groucho', is sung by Lady Clair Sinclive & the Pimen. The best thing to be said is that it is abysmal. A Bob Dylan sound-alike waffles over a noise similar to that of a train derailing. The effect is as jolly as Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, but no doubt it will win the next Eurovision Song Contest.

I found that the game loaded easily, and during this process you are treated to a picture of Groucho Marx complete with raising eyebrows and moving cigar.

The object is to wander around various locations of the USA picking up clues to a famous personality. Once you have decided who the person is, you send off the entry form with a slogan. If you are the lucky one, you win a trip to Hollywood and £500 spending money. Then you might as well throw the game away because apart from picking up cigars (the currency used) there is nothing else to do.

Playing **Groucho** is by no means easy. To start with, you are asked a question that has some apparent relevance to **Pimania**. If you get the answer wrong, you are informed 'You never played Pimania did you — sorry about this I won't be long.' There is a slight delay, hopefully to make the game easier for the uninitiated but more probably to make it harder because you didn't buy the first game. The game then starts in earnest. One of the difficulties is the use of commands. They must be entered perfectly or the computer refuses to accept them. Mind you, you don't get a boring 'I do not understand.' Oh no, you get responses such as 'That sort of phrase gives stupidity a bad name' or 'I suppose you want me to do the *Hokey Cokey* as well'. My favourite one was when I entered 'Go North'. It came up with 'What do you think this is, another Scott Adams adventure?'. As the phraseology is difficult I found these statements appearing quite often.

When visiting the locations, one of five things could happen: you could get hit with a bill (lowering the number of cigars held); you might get one of the Piman's and Groucho's jokes (come back Tony Blackburn, all is forgiven); a chance to play 'guess the star' (if you guess correctly, you get another clue to the famous personality); finally, a clue to the famous person or the chance to guess what is under one of three shells, with a surprise under each.

On the whole I didn't think Groucho a great game that would keep you coming back for more, unless you are a competition fanatic. On the plus side: the unusual format, with no orcs to kill or treasures to find. It is reasonably amusing (well, slightly funnier than **The Hobbit**), the graphics are good and of course there is the prize.

On the bad side: the language is not very user-friendly, the subject matter is not exceptionally strong, and of course there is the song...

D J Robinson

VAMPIRE VILLAGE for the 48K Spectrum

The packaging for this game from Terminal Software is eyecatching and the box is robust. The only fault in the box is that the instructions are printed on the back of the inlay card which has to be removed to read them.

The cassette has a copy of the program on both sides and I had no problem loading it. This takes approximately 3½ minutes, after which you are presented with a 5-page prologue. The prologue gives some background information on the game, and repeats the instructions on the inlay card. You are then asked if you wish to repeat the prologue or begin to play. If you elect to play, you are so informed. In fact, you are informed for about 17 seconds while the village is set up. You are then told you have £999 to equip your hero with all he needs to kill the vampire.

Your hero is quite dim and without constant supervision he is liable to wander into walls or the river. Wandering into walls has no other effect than to slow the game down, as the program pauses each time it is done. Wandering into the river without a boat causes you to drown. Buildings can only be entered when the owners open the doors; however, they can be left through walls. The buildings are a mixture of shops and houses, most of which can be used at a cost. Your hero needs to eat and sleep, otherwise he will die . A readout of his physical condition and what he is carrying can be obtained by pressing 'P'. There is also an audio warning of impending doom. Movement is controlled by the cursor keys and certain letters obtained by pressing 'V'.

The screen display is quite good, although the fields are garish. When the vampire appears (you can only see his eyes), he proceeds around the map killing at random. Once the vampire has visited a building, you can no longer use it. You also have to visit the outlying farms to instruct the farmers which crops to look after. You therefore have a busy time running between farms and preparing to do battle with the vampire. As your hero can only carry a limited amount of equipment, the fact that you can hide things is very helpful. If your hero dies, his replacement can find the items hidden by his predecessor.

The game is not bad, but could be better. Your hero cannot accomplish much before he has to sleep, and cannot sleep the whole night without dying of starvation. Movement is slow and the night seems to last forever. Your hero is hard to see at certain times, particularly at the bottom of the screen. If he misses a door, he ricochets happily off the wall (normally ending in the river), and will do so continually until you gain control.

I have never yet killed the vampire, but have ended up strangely addicted to this game. If you are persistent, I recommend you to buy it. However, if you are easily annoyed, forget it; it will drive you crazy.

Daniel T Canavan

*Read **The Imagination Machine** next month for more micro news & reviews.*

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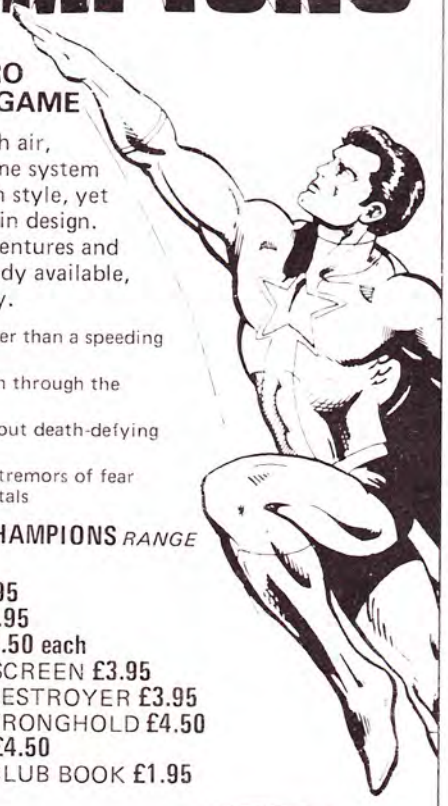

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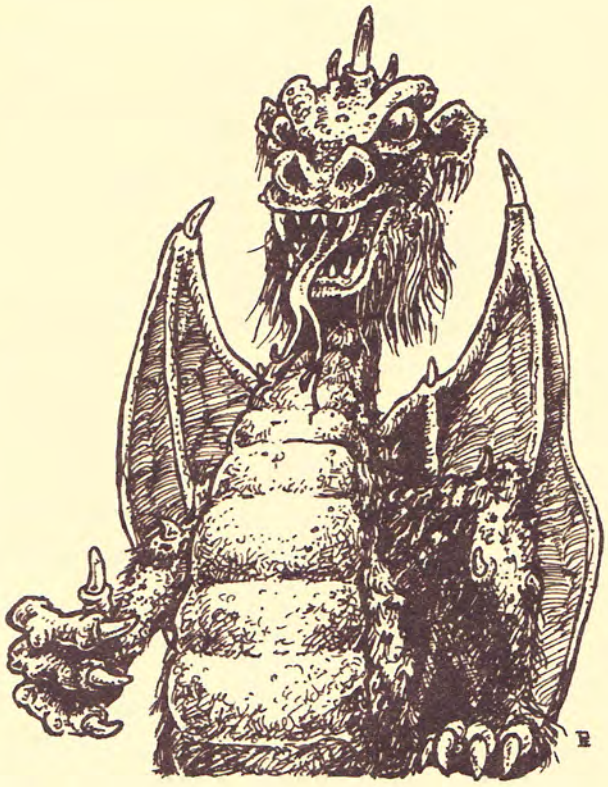
THE TOMBS OF THE KINGS

by Mike Brunton



This is a solo adventure, designed for three systems — a special set of rules for people who have never played an adventure game before, the **Basic D&D®** rules and the **Tunnels & Trolls** rules system.

If you have never played an adventure game before, read the section called **THE SPECIAL RULES** now. It tells you what you need and how to play. If you intend to play using either the D&D or Tunnels & Trolls rules, read the section marked **THE HOUSE RULES** before you start playing.

THE SPECIAL RULES

To play the game you will need two ordinary dice (you can make do with one if you throw it twice when needed) and a pencil and paper for notes.

You control the actions of three adventurers in search of riches and glory. The three are a Fighter, deadly in combat; a Priest, who fights nearly as well and can cure wounds; and a Magician, who does not fight but can cast deadly spells. Invent a name for each character, and note these down on a piece of paper, leaving space for other details you will discover during play.

This game is probably unlike any other you have ever played. There are no boards, counters, play money, cards, winners or losers. Instead of moving a counter round a board to the throw of a dice, you follow the adventure by reading the numbered sections in the middle pages of the magazine. Sections give you a description of the situation and a choice of actions, each of which refers you to a different numbered section. Thus, a typical section might look like this:

195. Standing next to a bronze fountain in the middle of the chamber is a large ogre. If you want to run away go to 235. If you want to fight go to 121 (Special Rules), 567 (D&D Rules) or 990 (T&T Rules).

You should decide what you want the three adventurers to do. If you want to fight the ogre you should go to section **121**. If you decide that it might be a good idea to run away, then you would turn to section **235** and read what it says. Your adventurers might escape, or they might have to fight the ogre.

You will notice that some choices (eg **121**) are only used when you are playing with the special rules (which you are!). Other choices are only for people using the full **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®** or **Tunnels & Trolls** rules (eg **567, 990**). Choices which do not mention a rules system (eg **235**) can be used by anybody.

If you get into a fight, the rules for this will be explained to you at the appropriate time.

Adventurers

Each adventurer has three states of health — whole, wounded or dead. All the adventurers start the game whole, but some of your choices — and fighting with monsters — may cause wounds to these adventurers. A wounded adventurer who takes another wound is dead — so it is a good idea to cure wounds as soon as possible. This is where the Priest's special abilities come into play.

The Priest can cure wounds completely (even his or her own), because this healing is magical. These wounds can be cured at any time, even during a fight, but the Priest can only cure 5 wounds during the whole adventure. Note this number down and tick them off as the Priest cures wounds. However, curing wounds will not bring a dead character back to life! Once the Priest has used all 5 cures (or is dead) he or she cannot perform this medical miracle.

The Fighter is simply that — someone good in combat. Generally the fighter will be better able to defeat things than his or her companions.

The Magician is an adventurer who cast spells, which are deadly against some creatures and useless against others. He or she has no other special abilities using these Special rules.

Jargon

The term 'gp' is used a lot in fantasy adventure games — it means 'gold piece(s)', the basic unit of money. You may like to keep a running total of the value (in gold pieces) of any treasure you find.

The only other terms that you may be unfamiliar with in the rules are 'roll a d6' or 'roll 2d6'. These mean, respectively, roll one or two six-sided dice (yes, the other rules use dice with more or fewer sides). You should always add the results of the two dice together.

Now that you have read the Special rules you should go to the section marked **START** and follow the instructions from there. You might find it a good idea to make some kind of sketch map once you are playing — it will make finding your way about a lot easier.

THE HOUSE RULES

You may take only first level Fighters (or Dwarfs or Halflings using the D&D rules) into the adventure, and then only one at a time. This rule always applies, despite the fact that there are references to 'adventurers' rather than 'adventurer'. The Special Rules allow a party of three characters to enter the adventure.

You need not worry about sources of light (for convenience these have been ignored), but you must have other standard equipment with you.

The format of the adventure consists of reading numbered sections and following the instructions, making choices where these are offered. Ignore options when these refer to a different rules system.

The standard rules are only modified a little for this adventure. As well as acting as a player, you will also act as the Dungeon or Games Master. However, to simplify this task:

1. Unless stated otherwise creatures will attack until they are killed.

2. There is no need to roll to see if secret doors are spotted.

All the other rules remain the same, but if you come across a case where they do not apply — improvise, DON'T CHEAT.

START:

Eight hundred years ago, the Kingdom of Almete rose up to be the most powerful Empire the world had ever seen. Under the despotic rule of its Caliphs the Empire prospered, then grew decadent.

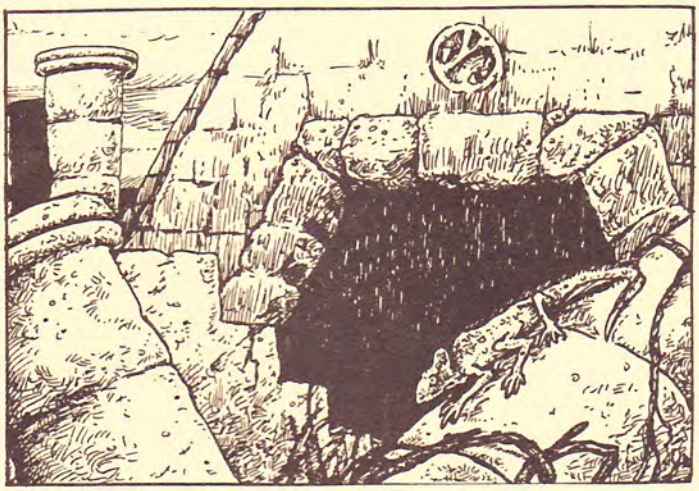
With the death of Hild, last of the Caliphs, the Empire fell. In their struggles to gain the Imperial throne, the generals destroyed the very thing they desired. Hild did not care, safely buried as she was in the Tombs of the Kings — surrounded by her worldly wealth.

Over the years, many adventurers perished searching for the Tombs. A diadem known as the Jiggalorum of Hild, a symbol of Imperial Might — perhaps more than a mere symbol — was the object of their quests.

Deep in the ruins of the former Imperial capital, you have found what could be the entrance to the Tombs of the Kings, and the resting place of the Jiggalorum. Before you lies a small square, once a forum, and on the other side of the square a set of steps leads down into the Tombs.

Unfortunately, a large blue dragon is sitting in the middle of the forum.

If you are using the Special Rules go to **1**, otherwise go to **10**.



1. The Dragon has noticed you. You have three options — talk to the creature, fight it or flee. If you want to run away go to **34**. If you want to fight go to **17**. If you want to talk to the Dragon go to **21**.

2. You are standing in the burial chamber of some powerful lord or lady, richly decorated with wall paintings showing scenes of Imperial might. A large stone sarcophagus, with a jar at its foot, stands in the middle of the room. If you wish to look for secret doors go to **15**. If you wish to investigate the jar go to **104**. If you wish to inspect the sarcophagus go to **162**. If you wish to leave the burial chamber by the eastern door go to **114**.

3. There are no secret doors here. Go to **43**.

4. You have fallen victim to a giant centipede, which will dine well off your remains. If you want another go create some new adventurers and then go to the **Start** section.

5. The chest collapses as soon as you touch it, causing dust to swirl up around you. In the remnants of the chest lie two gems worth 100gp each. In future ignore the treasure chest and go to **56** instead (note this number down). Go to **56**.

6. As you walk through the door and into the corridor behind it, the world around you wavers and dissolves. All around you is darkness, but in the distance a bright light is shining. As you travel towards the light — without actually bothering to walk — it grows larger and dimmer. Go to **181**.

7. The statue is much too slow to catch you and you easily manage to run from the room — but too quickly to choose a direction other than 'OUT'! Roll a d6. On a result of 1, 2 or 3 you run west (go to **16**), otherwise you run east (go to **43**).

8. The alcoves contain nothing but dust and old bones. Go to **166**.

9. You are standing in a small room, empty save for a gibbering figure hunched in one corner. He rises and advances towards you. With horror in your heart you realise that it is the writer of this adventure. 'Cheat! You shouldn't be reading this!' he screams at you.

10. Rising up on its haunches, the Dragon beckons you into the open square. You see little alternative but to obey. The Dragon stares at you, measuring your worth — and you look away, knowing that it is dangerous to meet a Dragon's gaze. Finally, it speaks. Go to **48**.

12. There are no secret doors here. Go to **134**.

13. Roll a d6. On a result of 6 go to **149**, otherwise go to **82**.

14. The statue is shattered. Its sword and scabbard are particularly fine, and worth 200gp. Next time, ignore the statue and go to **105** instead (note this number down). Go to **105**.

15. There are no secret doors here. Go to **2**.

16. You are in a dank passage, that curves to the east. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **132**. If you wish to go into the room to the south go to **75**. If you wish to go north and east go to **123**.

17. The Dragon rears up and makes a hideous, low hissing noise in its throat. It raises a claw as though to strike, and then speaks:
'Petty beings, I do not want your miserable lives. Put up your weapons and listen to me.' Go to **21**.

18. You manage a mad, desperate scramble into the ruins — escaping from the angered Dragon. Go to **150**.

19. The viscus has a Monster Rating of 24. At the end of each round of combat you may run away (go to **140**). If you kill the viscus go to **138**. If the viscus kills you go to **111**.

20. You have killed Ohm Molniya, the Blue Dragon. Go to **22**.

21. The Dragon sinks back onto its haunches, and speaks in a voice filled with ancient malice and wisdom. Go to **48**.

22. Congratulations. You have survived the Tombs of the Kings, though you didn't find the Jiggalorum of Hild. **THE END**.

23. As you take the diadem the corpse crumbles and falls in on itself, throwing up a cloud of dust. The jar at the foot of the sarcophagus cracks and shatters, releasing a foul vapour. You now have the Jiggalorum of Hild! In future ignore the sarcophagus description and go to **41** (note this number down). Now go to **41**.

24. Roll a d6. On a result of 1 or 2 go to **149**, otherwise go to **82**.

25. Roll a d6. On a result of 1 or 2 go to **141**, otherwise go to **157**.

26. You have killed the centipede. Around one of its legs was a ring worth 50gp. In future, ignore the centipede and go to **166** instead (note this number down). Go to **166**.

27. The skeletons have a Monster Rating of 9 each. At the end of each round of combat you may run away (go to **13**). If you kill the skeletons go to **58**. If the skeletons kill you go to **139**.

28. You are standing on a flight of stairs. If you wish to go up the stairs go to **181**. If you wish to go down the stairs go to **75**. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **129**.

29. You are standing in the cobweb-filled corridor. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **191**. If you wish to leave by the southern door go to **74**. If you wish to enter the room at the northern end of the corridor go to **73**.

30. Ohm Molniya has a Monster Rating of 80. You receive a combat add of +15 for possessing the Jiggalorum. At the end of each round of combat you may run away (go to **59**). If you kill Ohm Molniya go to **150**. If Ohm Molniya kills you go to **38**.

31. The green liquid hits one adventurer. Roll a d6. On a result of 1, 2 or 3 the Fighter is wounded. On a result of 4 or 5 the Priest is wounded. On a result of 6 the Magician is wounded. The Priest may cure the wound. If all your adventurers are dead go to **69**, otherwise go to **154**.

32. The giant rat is dead. Hidden in its nest is a ring worth 40gp. Next time ignore the rat and go to **137** instead (note this number down). Go to **137**.

33. You are standing in an ancient burial chamber with four alcoves, empty save for a few bones and piles of dust. If you want to search for secret doors go to **72**. If you want to inspect the alcoves go to **102**. If you want to leave by the eastern door go to **134**.

34. Before you can even start to run away, the Dragon tenses itself for flight and says 'Where will you run to escape me, fools?' Go to **21**.

35. HOW TO FIGHT OHM MOLNIYA THE BLUE DRAGON

First Ohm Molniya attacks twice. For each attack roll 2d6.

If the result is 2-7, the attack misses;
8 or 9 the Fighter is wounded;
10 or 11 the Priest is wounded;
12 the Magician is wounded.

Adventurers die if wounded TWICE without being cured.

Then your surviving adventurers each make one attack.

The Fighter swings his or her sword; roll 2d6. If the result is 10 or more Ohm Molniya dies.

The Priest wields his or her mace, roll 2d6. If the result is 10 or more Ohm Molniya dies.

The Magician casts a spell, roll 2d6. If the result is 7 or more Ohm Molniya dies.

You may run away (go to **59**) or the Priest may cure a wound.

Finally, repeat all the above steps until Ohm Molniya dies (then go to **150**) or all your adventurers are dead (go to **38**).

36. There are no secret doors here. Go to **142**.

37. You are in an old tomb, faced by two tebbyts — small green humanoid creatures — who rush toward you, waving short scimitars. If you have already beaten the tebbyts you will know where to go now. If you wish to run away go to **107**. If you wish to fight go to **57** (Special Rules), **97** (D&D rules) or **152** (T&T rules).

38. Ohm Molniya has won the fight, and your adventurers are dead. You very nearly completed the quest. Despite the fact that you failed, there is little point in starting again, because if you are reading this you know too much about the adventure. **THE END**.

39. There are no secret doors here. Go to **146**.

40. Unfortunately, you have lost the fight with the tebbyts. The Tombs have claimed some more victims. If you want to have another go, create some more adventurers and go to the **Start** section.

41. You are standing in the burial chamber of Hild. A large stone sarcophagus with its top open stands in the middle of the room. At the foot of the sarcophagus stand the shattered remains of a stoneware jar. If you wish to look for secret doors go to **180**. If you wish to leave the burial chamber go to **114**.

42. Before you can start looking for secret doors, you catch sight of a large spider lurking above the southern door. If you wish to enter the room at the northern end of the corridor and avoid the spider go to **73**. If you have already beaten the spider you will know where to go now. If you wish to fight the spider go to **50** (Special Rules), **163** (D&D Rules) or **99** (T&T Rules).

43. You are on a landing. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **3**. If you wish to go down the north stairs go to **116**. If you wish to leave by the east door go to **123**. If you wish to go down the south stairs go to **118**. If you wish to leave by the west door go to **187**.

44. As you move the boxes, you notice that one is moving of its own accord. If you have already beaten the mimic you know where to go now. If you wish to run go to **86**. If you wish to fight the mimic go to **192** (Special Rules), **160** (D&D Rules) or **128** (T&T Rules).

45. Roll a d6. On a result of 5 or 6 go to **147**, otherwise go to **100**.

46. There are no secret doors here. Go to **105**.

47. You have not found any secret doors in the room. Go to **187**.

48. 'I, Ohm Molniya, have a task for you. Beneath this square lies the Tombs of the Kings. I see from your eyes that you knew as much. I am too large to get into the tunnels, but you could do so easily.

'Hidden somewhere within the Tombs is a bauble which I desire — the Jiggalorum of Hild. All else that you find you may keep, but that dainty is mine.

'Your lives hang by a thread, a thread that is mine to break. Return with the Jiggalorum and you will live. Fail, and the ravens will pick over your bones when I have finished with them.'

Ohm Molniya gestures at the stairway with a long, curved claw. With mounting apprehension you step forward and go down into the darkness. Go to **28**.

49. There is nothing of value in the rubbish. Go to **75**.

50. HOW TO FIGHT THE LARGE SPIDER

First the spider attacks. Roll 2d6. If the result is:
2-9 the attack misses;
10 the Fighter is asleep and can not attack;
11 the Priest is asleep and can not attack;
12 the Magician is asleep and can not cast spells.

Then your conscious adventurers each make one attack.

The Fighter swings his or her sword, roll 2d6. If the result is 7 or more the spider dies.

The Priest wields his or her mace, roll 2d6. If the result is 9 or more the spider dies.

The Magician casts a spell, roll 2d6. If the result is 10 or more the spider dies.

The Priest may cure a wound.

Finally, repeat all the above steps until the spider dies (then go to **110**) or all your adventurers are asleep (go to **25**).

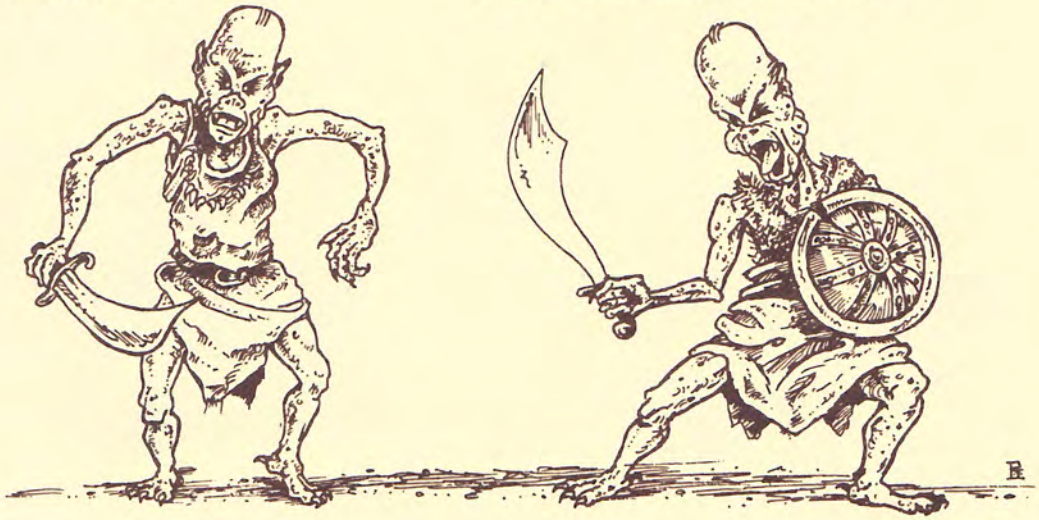
51. There are no secret doors here. Go to **112**.

52. Before you get a chance to run the Dragon has sprung into the air and cut off your line of retreat. Now you must fight. Go to **186** (Special Rules), **76** (D&D Rules) or **93** (T&T Rules).

53. All lost hit points are restored. Go to **91**.

54. Scattered in the rubbish pile are a handful of coins, worth 10gp. You may find these coins once, next time go to **49** instead (note this number down). Return to **75**.

55. There are no secret doors here. Go to **124**.



56. You are standing in the treasure chamber. All that remains of the treasures once here is a broken chest against one wall. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **101**. If you wish to leave by the west door go to **37**.

57. HOW TO FIGHT THE TWO TEBBYTS
First the tebbyts attack. For each surviving tebbyt roll 2d6.
If the result is 2 to 9 the tebbyt's attack misses.
10 the Fighter is wounded.
11 the Priest is wounded.
12 the Magician is wounded.
Adventurers die if wounded TWICE without being cured.
Then your surviving adventurers each make one attack.
The Fighter swings his or her sword, roll 2d6. If the result is 7 or more a tebbyt dies.
The Priest wields his or her mace, roll 2d6. If the result is 9 or more a tebbyt dies.
The Magician casts a spell, roll 2d6. If the result is 10 or more a tebbyt dies.
You may run away (go to **107**) or the Priest may cure a wound.
Finally, repeat all the above steps until the tebbyts die (then go to **94**) or all your adventurers are dead (go to **40**).

58. The skeletons are now only heaps of old bones. One of them was carrying an inlaid buckler (a type of shield) worth 125gp. In future ignore the skeletons and go to **124** instead (note this number down). Now go to **124**.

59. Roll 2d6. On a result of 10, 11 or 12 go to **18**, otherwise go to **183**.

60. You are standing in the burial chamber of Hild. A large stone sarcophagus, with a broken jar at its foot, stands in the middle of the room. Around the jar is a red-brown stain. If you wish to look for secret doors go to **174**. If you wish to inspect the sarcophagus go to **162**. If you wish to leave the burial chamber by the eastern door go to **114**.

61. The dark defenders of the Tombs have claimed you. If you want to have another go, create a new group of adventurers and return to the **Start** section.

62. There are no secret doors here. Go to **118**.

63. The creature is a giant centipede, which scuttles forward to attack you. If you have already beaten the centipede you will know where to go now. If you want to run away go to **45**. If you wish to fight the centipede go to **144** (Special Rules), **80** (D&D Rules) or **64** (T&T Rules).

64. The centipede has a Monster Rating of 8. At the end of each round of combat you may run away (go to **45**). If you kill the centipede go to **26**. If the centipede kills you go to **4**.

65. Depending on which rules you are using, you should go to **184** (Special Rules), **53** (D&D Rules) or **164** (T&T Rules).

66. You manage to escape the mimic, barely slamming the door back to the torture chamber in the creature's 'face'. Go to **74**.

67. You are standing in an emptied treasure chamber, where only a few heaps of dust and splintered wood show where chests and coffers once stood. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **85**. If you wish to investigate the remains of the chests go to **135**. If you wish to leave the room by the northern door go to **114**.

68. You are standing in the old tomb. In the middle of the room are the remains of the tebbyts. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **89**. If you wish to leave by the northern door go to **75**. If you wish to leave by the eastern door go to **112**.

69. You have fallen victim to a trap, rather than a monster — but you have still 'lost' this time. If you want another go, create some new adventurers and go to the **Start** section.

70. The creature is a statue (AC 3; HD 2; hp 9; #AT 1; D 1-8; xp 20). At the end of each melee round you may run away (go to **7**). If you kill the statue go to **14**. If the statue kills you go to **61**.

71. You cannot avoid the oncoming tide of sludge! To fight the viscus go to **170** (Special Rules), **95** (D&D Rules) or **19** (T&T Rules).

72. There are no secret doors here, but your search did disturb something.... Go to **63**.

73. You are standing in a chamber, roughly square-shaped. There is a pile of rags and other rubbish in one corner. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **159**. If you wish to investigate the rubbbish pile go to **176**. If you wish to leave by the eastern corridor go to **179**. If you wish to go down the southern corridor go to **117**.

74. You are standing in a large burial chamber, long ago converted into a torture chamber. Rusted torturer's equipment lies about, and the floor is covered in a layer of rust and rotted wood. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **155**. If you wish to leave by the northern door go to **108**. If you go down the eastern corridor go to **158**. If you wish to go through the southern door go to **167**.

75. You are standing in a bare hall, the floor covered in dead leaves and twigs that have blown in over the years. In one corner is a deeper pile of rubbish. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **177**. If you wish to search the rubbish pile go to **54**. You may leave by going up the stairs (go to **28**), by the corridor to the north (go to **16**) or by the southern door (go to **37**).

76. Ohm Molniya is a blue dragon (AC 0; HD 9; hp 36; #AT 3; D 2-7/2-7/3-30; xp 2300). Ohm Molniya will not use his breath weapon. At the end of each round you may run away (go to **81**). If you kill Ohm Molniya go to **20**. If the dragon kills you go to **83**.

77. The statue has a Monster Rating of 19. At the end of each round of combat you may run away (go to **7**). If you kill the statue go to **14**. If the statue kills you go to **61**.

78. Leaving the enraged tebbyts behind, you manage to scramble out of one of the doors in the room. Roll a d6. On a result of 5 or 6 you leave through the eastern door (go to **112**), otherwise you leave through the northern door (go to **75**).

79. HOW TO FIGHT THE GIANT RAT
First the rat attacks. Roll 2d6.
If the result is 2 to 9, the rat's attack misses.
10, the Fighter is wounded.
11, the Priest is wounded.
12, the Magician is wounded.
Adventurers die if wounded TWICE without being cured.
Then your surviving adventurers each make one attack.
The Fighter swings his or her sword, roll 2d6. If the result is 5 or more the rat dies.
The Priest wields his or her mace, roll 2d6. If the result is 7 or more the rat dies.
The Magician casts a spell, roll 2d6. If the result is 9 or more the rat dies.
You may run away (go to **106**) or the Priest may cure a wound.
Repeat these steps until the Rat has wounded an adventurer. It will then run off (go to **113**). If the Rat is dead go to **32**.

MORANME JOBSWURF

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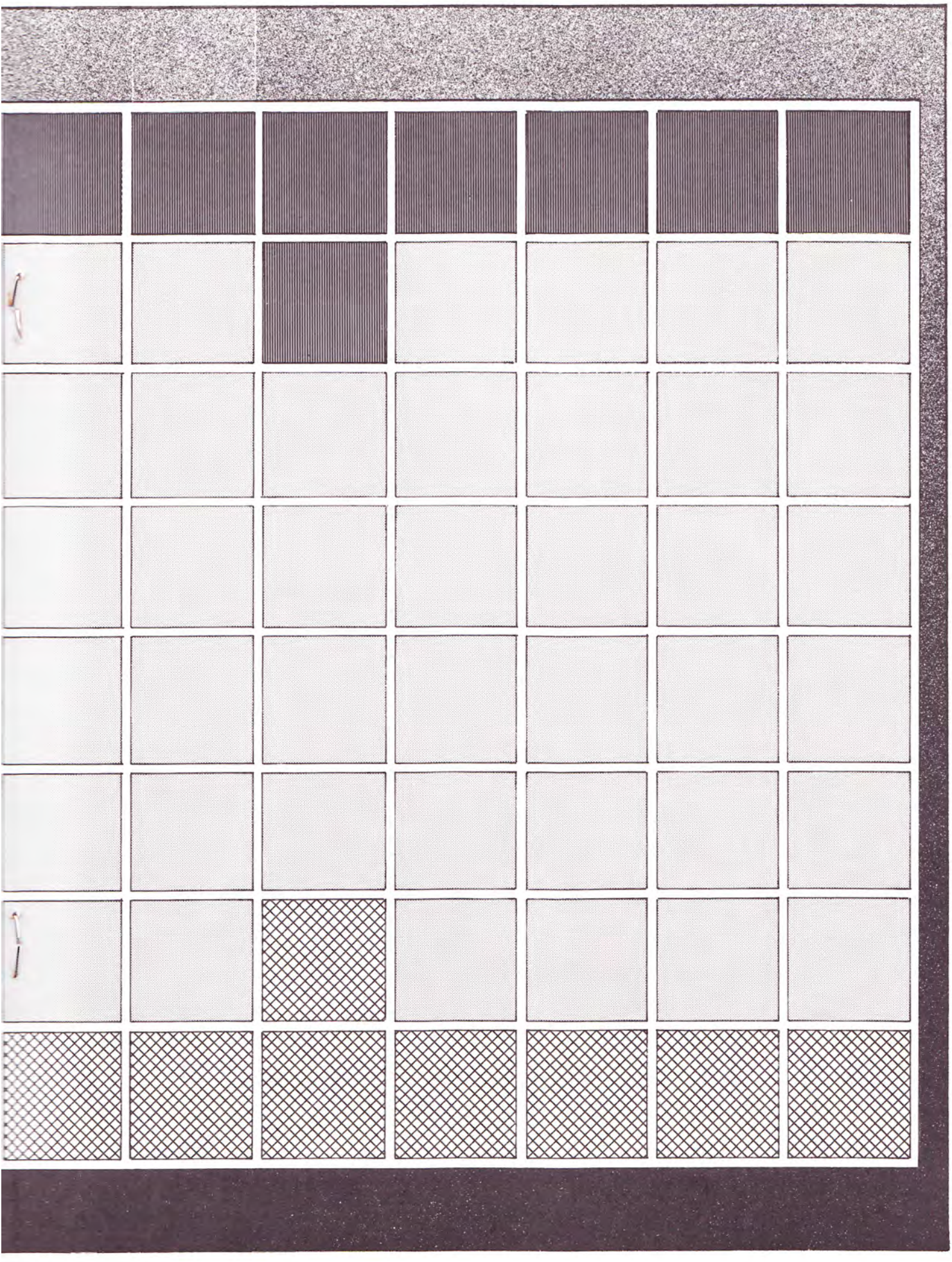


80. The creature is a centipede (AC 9; HD 1-4hp; hp 2; D 1-8 + poison; xp 6). At the end of each round you may run away (go to **45**). If you kill the centipede go to **26**. If the centipede kills you go to **4**.

81. Roll 2d6. On a result of 12 go to **22**, otherwise go to **52**.

82. Despite your efforts, the skeletons block your escape and attack. Go to **151** (Special Rules), **178** (D&D Rules) or **27** (T&T Rules).

83. Ohm Molniya the Dragon has killed you — an heroic death, but death nevertheless. If you want another go, create some new adventurers and go to the **Start** section.

84. You manage to scramble back from the advancing sludge-creature and get through the eastern door. Go to **114**.

85. Despite much effort, you did not find any secret doors. Go to **67**.

86. Roll a d6. On a result of 1, 2 or 3 go to **66**, otherwise go to **143**.

87. The urn is made of good quality china clay with a wax seal around the lid. The plinth that it stands on has a number of small holes round the edge. These seem to be spray holes of some kind. If you wish to open the urn carefully go to **130**. If you wish to break into the urn go to **175**. If you wish to ignore the urn go to **124**.

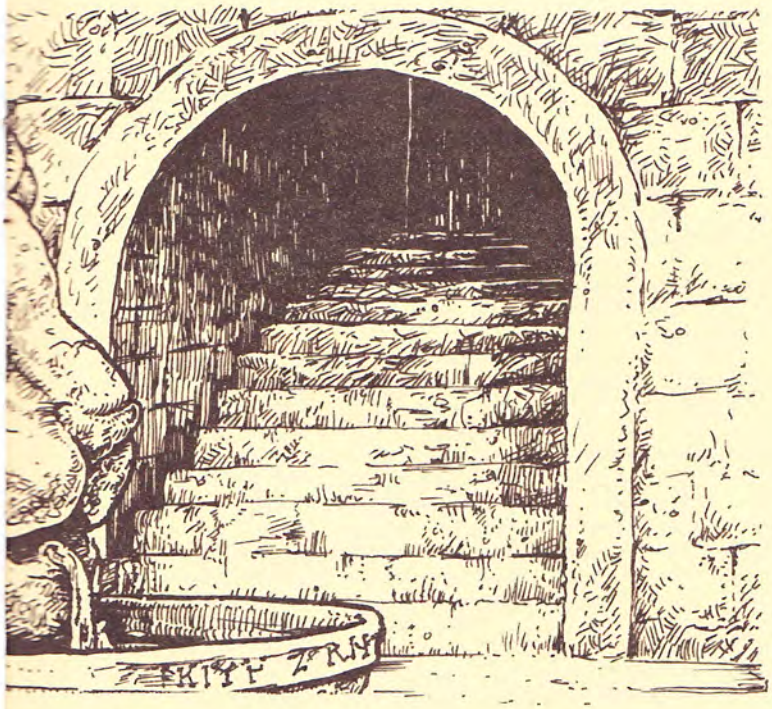
88. From within the jar, a red-brown sludge flows quickly across the floor towards you, as though motivated by some intelligence. If you have already beaten the viscus you will know where to go now. There is no chance of escape; you must fight the creature. Go to **170** (Special Rules), **95** (D&D Rules) or **19** (T&T Rules).

89. You have found a secret door in the western wall of the tomb. If you wish to go through it go to **134**. If you wish to leave by the northern (ordinary) door go to **75**. If you wish to leave by the eastern door go to **112**.

90. You are standing in a long dusty corridor. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **121**. If you wish to go up the eastward steps at the northern end go to **146**. If you wish to go through the southern door go to **114**.

91. The lion-head fountain is very old. A small rivulet of water emerges from a spout in the lion's mouth, and dribbles into the bowl below, on which the words 'DRINK AND BE MADE WHOLE' are carved. If you wish to drink the water go to **65**. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **153**. If you wish to leave by the west door go to **179**. If you wish to go up the south stairs go to **116**.

92. The chest is made of old, rotted wood. It does not appear to be trapped. You may ignore the chest (go to **112**) or open it (go to **5**).



93. Ohm Molniya has a Monster Rating of 80. At the end of each round of combat you may run away (go to **81**). If you kill Ohm Molniya go to **20**. If Ohm Molniya kills you go to **83**.

94. Both tebbyts are now dead. When you search their bodies you find an icy blue sapphire worth 60gp. Next time you meet the tebbyts ignore them and go to **68** instead (note this number down). Go to **68**.

95. The creature is a viscus (AC 4; HD 2+3; hp 14; #AT 1; D 1-6; xp 25). At the end of each round you may run away (go to **140**). If you kill the viscus go to **138**. If the viscus kills you go to **111**.

96. Ohm Molniya is a blue dragon (AC 0; HD 9; hp 36; #AT 3; D 2-7/2-7/3-30; xp 2300). Ohm Molniya will not use his breath weapon. Your Armour Class is improved by 3 and your attacks receive a bonus of +1 vs Ohm Molniya because of the effects of the Jiggalorum. At the end of each melee round you may run away (go to **59**). If you kill Ohm Molniya go to **150**. If Ohm Molniya kills you go to **38**.

97. The creatures are two tebbyts (AC 9; HD 1; hp 5; #AT 1; D 2-5; xp 10). At the end of each melee round you may run away (go to **107**). If you kill the tebbyts go to **94**. If the tebbyts kill you go to **40**.

98. Make a saving throw vs poison at +3. If you fail take 1-4 points of damage. If your character is dead go to **69**, otherwise go to **154**.

99. The giant spider has a Monster Rating of 18. However, it does not cause normal damage — any successful attack by the spider puts you to sleep (go to **25**). If you kill the spider go to **110**.

100. The centipede was too quick to allow you an escape route —you must fight the creature. Go to **144** (Special Rules), **80** (D&D Rules) or **64** (T&T Rules).

101. There are no secret doors here. Go to **56**.

102. Before you can search the alcoves properly, something is disturbed by your activity.... Go to **63**.

103. There are no secret doors here. Go to **167**.

104. The jar is stoneware, and inscribed with the word 'HILD'. If you have already opened or broken the jar you know where to go now. If you wish to break the jar go to **88**. If you wish to open it carefully go to **115**. If you wish to ignore the jar go to **2**.

105. You are standing in the large chamber. In the middle of the chamber are the remains of the statue warrior. The statue is valueless. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **46**. If you wish to leave by the eastern door go to **43**. If you wish to leave by the western corridor go to **16**.

106. Roll a d6. On a result of 1 or 2 go to **148**, otherwise go to **169**.

107. Roll a d6. On a result of 5 or 6 go to **127**, otherwise go to **78**.

108. As you go through the door and enter a cobweb filled corridor, a large spider falls upon you from above the door. There is no chance to escape. If you have already beaten the spider you will know where to go to now, otherwise you must fight it. Go to **50** (Special Rules), **163** (D&D Rules) or **99** (T&T Rules).

109. The mimic is dead and now you can investigate the boxes. In future, ignore the mimic and go to **173** instead (note this number down). Go to **173**.

110. Next time, ignore the spider and go to **29** instead (note this number down). Go to **29**.

111. You have fallen victim to a viscus, a type of undead creature. If you want to have another go, return to the **Start** section.

112. You are in an abandoned treasure chamber. All that is left here is a large chest against one wall. If you have already opened the chest you will know what to do now. If you wish to open it go to **5**. If you wish to inspect it go to **92**. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **51**. If you wish to leave by the west door go to **37**.

113. After managing one bite, the rat realises the odds are against it and scuttles down a small hole behind the rubbish pile. If all your adventurers are dead go to **171**, otherwise go to **193**.

114. You are in an antechamber. In the middle are two skeletons, who move forward to take up an defensive stance before a large urn. If you have already beaten the skeletons you will know where to go to now. If you wish to run away go to **24**. If you wish to fight them go to **151** (Special Rules), **176** (D&D Rules) or **27** (T&T Rules).

115. Inside the jar, a red-brown sludge seethes and bubbles, and then starts to expand, emerging from the jar. If you have already beaten the viscus, you know where to go now. If you wish to run away go to **131**. If you wish to fight the sludge-like viscus go to **170** (Special rules), **95** (D&D rules) or **19** (T&T rules).

116. You are standing on a flight of stairs. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **194**. If you wish to go south (and up the stairs) go to **43**. If you wish to go north (and down the stairs) go to **142**.

117. You are in a corridor which is nearly filled with cobwebs that hang from the ceiling. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **42**. If you wish to leave by the southern door go to **189**. If you wish to enter the room at the northern end of the corridor go to **73**.

118. You are standing on a flight of stairs. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **62**. If you wish to go north (and up the stairs) go to **43**. If you wish to go south (and down) go to **158**.

119. There are no secret doors here. Go to **179**.

120. You have found no secret doors here. Go to **185**.

121. You have not found any secret doors. Go to **90**.

122. There are no secret doors here. Go to **166**.

123. You are standing in a large chamber. In the middle of the chamber is a tall statue of a warrior. As you approach, it lifts its arm and draws its sword with ponderous, powerful movements. If you have beaten the statue you know where to go to now. If you wish to run away go to **7**. If you wish to fight the statue go to **161** (Special Rules), **70** (D&D Rules) or **77** (T&T Rules).

124. In the room are the remains of the skeletons and a large pottery treasure urn on a plinth. If you have already opened the urn you know where to go now. If you wish to inspect the urn go to **87**. If you wish to open the urn go to **175**. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **55**. If you wish to leave by the northern door go to **90**. If you wish to go through the southern door go to **67**. If you wish to go through the western door go to **2**.

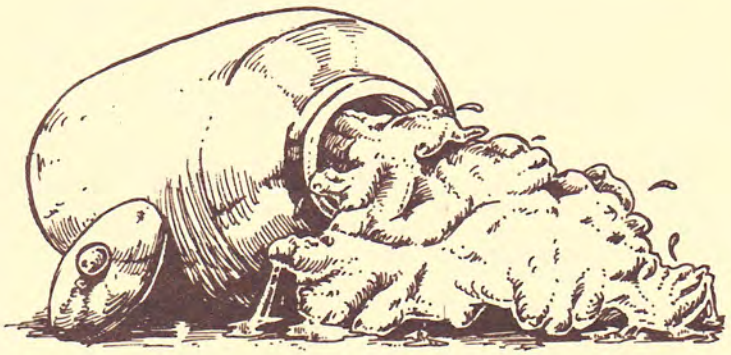
125. Ohm Molniya regards you with something akin to approval and says 'Congratulations, worthy ones. My trust in you was not misplaced. Give the Jiggalorum to me — and then depart with your lives.'

If you want to give the Jiggalorum to Ohm Molniya go to **190**. If you want to run away go to **59**. If you want to fight go to **35** (Special rules), **96** (D&D Rules) or **30** (T&T Rules).

126. There are no secret doors here. Go to **158**.

127. The tebbyts were too quick, and blocked your escape route. Now you must fight them, so go to **57** (Special Rules), **97** (D&D Rules) or **152** (T&T Rules).

128. The mimic has a Monster Rating of 25. At the end of each round of combat you may run away (go to **165**). If you kill the mimic go to **109**. If the mimic kills you go to **133**.



129. There are no secret doors here. Return to **28**.

130. A green liquid sprays out from the holes in the plinth, but you manage to avoid being splashed. Go to **154**.

131. Roll a d6. On a result of 1, 2 or 3 go to **71**, otherwise go to **84**.

132. There are no secret doors here. Go to **16**.

133. You have fallen victim to a mimic, ending the adventure as its next meal. You can rest assured that it probably got heartburn. If you want to have another go, create some new adventurers and go back to the **Start** section.

134. You are standing in a corridor. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **12**. If you wish to leave by the eastern door go to **37**. If you wish to leave by the western door go to **33**.

135. Searching through the dust and remains of the coffers reveals a handful of gold coins, in total worth 15gp. You can only find this treasure once: ignore that part of the section next time. Go to **67**.

136. You are on a landing above a flight of stairs. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **188**. If you wish to go down to the east go to **146**. If you wish to go through the door to the south go to **73**.

137. There is nothing of value in the rubbish pile. Go to **73**.

138. The viscus is dead. In future ignore it and go to **60** instead (note this number down). Now go to **60**.

139. You have been slain by Hild's skeletal guardians. This is where the adventure ends for you this time. If you want to have another go create some new adventurers and return to the **Start** section.

140. Roll a d6. On a result of 6 go to **71**, otherwise go to **84**.

141. You have been unlucky enough to fall victim to a large spider — and became its next meal. This is effectively the end of the adventure for you. If you wish to try again, create some new adventurers and go to the **Start** section.

142. You are standing in a chamber, without any decoration except a fountain or water spout carved in the shape of a lion's head with a bowl below it. If you wish to inspect the fountain go to **91**. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **36**. If you wish to leave by the stairs going south (and up) go to **116**. If you wish to leave by the western door go to **178**.

143. The mimic was too quick and cut off your only escape route back to the torture chamber. Now go to **192** (Special Rules), **160** (D&D Rules) or **128** (T&T Rules) to fight the mimic.

144. HOW TO FIGHT THE CENTIPEDE

First the centipede attacks. Roll 2d6.

If the result is 2-9 the centipede's attack misses.

10: the Fighter is wounded.
11: the Priest is wounded.
12: the Magician is wounded.

Adventurers die if wounded TWICE without being cured.

Then your surviving adventurers each make one attack.

The Fighter swings his or her sword, roll 2d6. If the result is 6 or more the centipede dies.

The Priest wields his or her mace, roll 2d6. If the result is 8 or more the centipede dies.

The Magician casts a spell, roll 2d6. If the result is 10 or more the centipede dies.

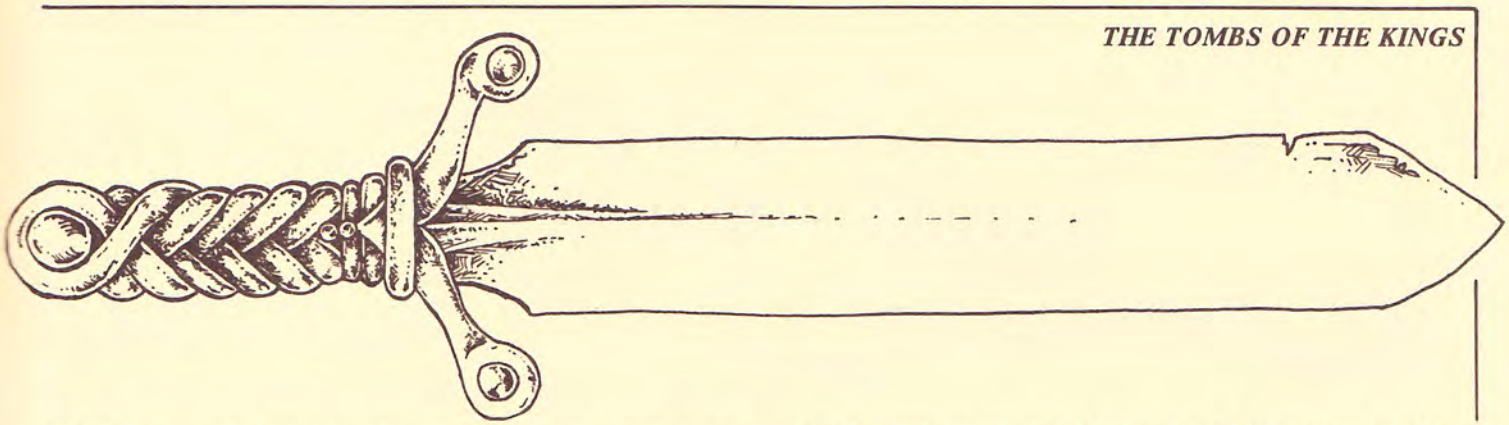
You may run away (go to **45**) or the Priest may cure a wound.

Finally, repeat all the above steps until the Centipede dies (then go to **26**) or all your adventurers are dead (go to **4**).

145. The creature is a rat (AC 7; HD 1-4hp; hp 2; #AT 1; D 1-3 + poison; xp 8). Once the rat has successfully hit you it will run away (go to **113**). At the end of each melee round you may run away (go to **106**). If you kill the rat go to **32**.

146. You are standing on a long-unused flight of stairs. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **39**. If you wish to go up the stairs (to the west) go to **136**. If you wish to go down and east go to **90**.

147. Leaving the scuttling monstrosity behind, you manage to make a break into the corridor. Go to **134**.



148. You escape the rat, and run down the nearest exit. Roll a d6. On a result of 1 or 2 you run south (go to **117**), otherwise you run east (go to **179**).

149. You scramble away from the skeletons' bony clutches. Roll a d6. On a result of 1 or 2 you run through the northern door (go to **90**). On a result 3 or 4 you run through western door (go to **2**). On a result of 5 or 6 you run through the southern door (go to **67**).

150. As you hold the Jiggalorum of Hild, it glows in the fading sunlight. You have succeeded in the quest, and though you can feel that the Jiggalorum has at least temporarily lost its power, selling it to some Wizard or other will yield a handsome reward. Well done, you have effectively 'won' this adventure. **THE END**.

151. HOW TO FIGHT THE TWO SKELETONS
First the skeletons attack. For each surviving skeleton roll 2d6.
If the result is 2-8 the skeleton's attack misses.
9-10 the Fighter is wounded.
11 the Priest is wounded.
12 the Magician is wounded.
Adventurers die if wounded TWICE without being cured.
Then your surviving adventurers each make one attack.
The Fighter swings his or her sword, roll 2d6. If the result is 9 or more a skeleton dies.
The Priest wields his or her mace, roll 2d6. If the result is 6 or more a skeleton dies.
The Magician casts a spell, roll 2d6. If the result is 10 or more a skeleton dies.
You may run away (go to **13**) or the Priest may cure a wound.
Finally, repeat all the above steps until the skeletons die (then go to **58**) or all your adventurers are dead (go to **139**).

152. The tebbyts have a Monster Rating of 6 each. At the end of each round of combat you may run away (go to **107**). If you kill the tebbyts go to **94**. If the tebbyts kill you, go to **40**.

153. There are no secret doors here. Go to **91**.

154. Inside the urn were a broadsword worth 150gp, a small crystal box (worth 200gp in itself) containing three red gems each worth 35gp and a gilt dagger worth 25gp. Next time, ignore the urn and go to **185** instead (note this number down). Now go to **185**.

155. There are no secret doors here. Go to **74**.

156. Ohm Molniya rears up to his full height and bellows 'What do you mean? Why haven't you got the Jiggalorum of Hild? I give you one last chance to bring it to me, foolish and petty beings!'
If you wish to go down the stairs go to **28**. If you wish to run away go to **81**. If you wish to fight the dragon go to **186** (Special Rules), **76** (D&D Rules) or **93** (T&T Rules).

157. You wake up, cocooned in silk, but with the spider nowhere in sight. Although you feel sick because of the spider's venom, you nevertheless manage to break the silken strands and crawl away. If you wish to crawl through the southern door go to **74**. If you wish to crawl to the room at the north end of the corridor go to **73**.

158. You are in a long passage, unused to judge by the dust on the floor. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **126**. If you wish to go up the stairs at the east end go to **118**. If you wish to enter the room at the west end of the passage go to **74**.

159. You have found a secret door in the northern wall. If you wish to go through the secret door go to **136**. If you wish to search the rubbish pile next to it go to **176**. If you wish to leave by the southern corridor go to **117**, or by the eastern corridor go to **179**.

160. The creature is a mimic (AC 7; HD 3+1; hp 10; D 1-4; xp 50). At the end of each melee round you may run away (go to **165**). If you kill the mimic go to **109**. If the mimic kills you go to **133**.

161. HOW TO FIGHT THE STATUE
First, your surviving adventurers each make one attack.
The Fighter swings his or her sword, roll 2d6. If the result is 10 or more the statue dies.
The Priest wields his or her mace, roll 2d6. If the result is 11 or more the statue dies.
The Magician casts a spell, roll 2d6. If the result is 9 or more the statue dies.
Then the statue attacks. Roll 2d6.
If the result is 2-7 the statue's attack misses.
8-9 the Fighter is wounded.
10-11 the Priest is wounded.
12 the Magician is wounded.
Adventurers die if wounded TWICE without being cured.
You may run away (go to **7**) or the Priest may cure a wound.
Finally, repeat all the above steps until the statue dies (then go to **14**) or all your adventurers are dead (go to **61**).

162. The sarcophagus is made of granite blocks, but does not appear to be trapped in any way, relying upon its weight to deter intruders. If you wish to slide back the lid and look inside the sarcophagus go to **182**. If you wish to ignore the sarcophagus go to **2**.

163. The creature is a spider (AC 7; HD 1+1; hp 7; D special; xp 19). The spider does not inflict normal damage, but a successful hit puts you to sleep (go to **25**). If you kill the spider go to **110**.

164. All damage to your constitution is healed. Go to **91**.

165. Roll a d6. On a result of 5 or 6 go to **66**, otherwise go to **143**.

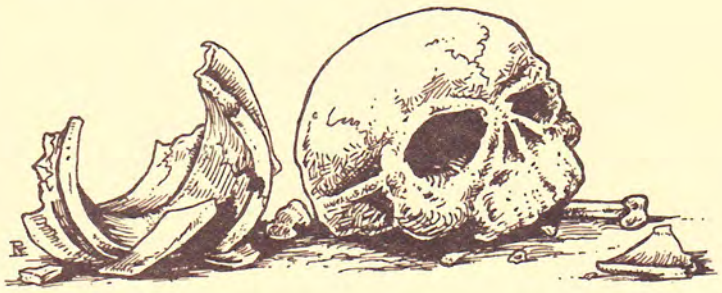
166. You are in an ancient burial chamber with four alcoves, which is empty except for a few bones and piles of dust. If you want to search for secret doors go to **122**. If you want to inspect the alcoves go to **8**. If you want to leave by the west door go to **134**.

167. You are in a storeroom for the torture chamber. The room contains several large wooden boxes, most of which are badly mildewed and rotted. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **103**. If you wish to investigate the boxes go to **44**. If you wish to leave the room and go back to the torture chamber go to **74**.

168. Make a Level 1 Saving Roll. If you fail take 1-6 hit points of damage. If your character is dead go to **69**, otherwise go to **154**.

169. The giant rat was too quick for you, and you must fight it. Now go to **79** (Special Rules), **145** (D&D Rules) or **195** (T&T Rules).

170. HOW TO FIGHT THE VISCUS
First the viscus attacks. Roll 2d6.
If the result is 2-7 the viscus's attack misses.
8-9 the Fighter is wounded.
10-11 the Priest is wounded.
12 the Magician is wounded.
Adventurers die if wounded TWICE without being cured.
Then your surviving adventurers each make one attack.
The Fighter swings his or her sword, roll 2d6. If the result is 11 or more the viscus dies.
The Priest attacks, roll 2d6. If the result is 12 the viscus dies.
The Magician casts a spell, roll 2d6. If the result is 7 or more the viscus dies.
You may run away (go to **140**) or the Priest may cure a wound.
Finally, repeat all the above steps until the viscus dies (then go to **138**) or all your adventurers are dead (go to **111**).



171. This is the end of the adventure for you. If you want to start again, create some new adventurers and go back to the **Start** section.

172. You have found a secret door in the ceiling. You find that it leads to a room stacked with treasure. You can't find it of course, because you shouldn't be reading this at all.

173. There is nothing of value in the boxes. Go to **167**.

174. There are no secret doors here. Go to **60**.

175. As you touch the urn, a green liquid sprays out from its plinth. Go to **31** (Special Rules), **98** (D&D Rules) or **168** (T&T Rules).

176. Before you can properly search the rubbish you manage to disturb the nest of a giant rat, which leaps out to attack you. If you have already fought the giant rat you will know where to go now. If you wish to run away go to **106**. If you wish to fight the rat go to **79** (Special Rules), **145** (D&D Rules) or **195** (T&T Rules).

177. There are no secret doors here. Return to **75**.

178. The creatures are two skeletons (AC 7; HD 1; hp 3; #AT 1; D 1-6; xp 10). At the end of each round you may run away (go to **13**). If you kill the skeletons go to **58**. If the skeletons kill you go to **139**.

179. You are in a dusty corridor, hung with cobwebs so low that you have to bend down to pass beneath. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **119**. If you wish to enter the room to the west go to **73**. If you wish to go through the east door go to **142**.

180. There are no secret doors here. Go to **41**.

181. You emerge into the open square. Before you sits Ohm Molniya, waiting for your return. One claw taps gently on the ground, a sign that the dragon is growing impatient. Catching sight of you, the Ohm Molniya asks if you have found the Jiggalorum. If you have it go to **125**, otherwise go to **156**.

182. Lying inside the sarcophagus is a body, wrapped in bandages. Clutched in the corpse's hand is a diadem, which seems to glow with a light of its own. If you wish to take the diadem go to **23**. If you wish to ignore the body and close the lid go to **2**.

183. Before you get a chance to run the dragon has sprung into the air and cut off your line of retreat. Now you must fight. Go to **35** (Special Rules), **96** (D&D Rules) or **30** (T&T Rules).

184. Any wounded adventurers are cured. Go to **91**.

185. You are in the antechamber. In the middle of the room are the remains of the skeletons and a large urn. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **120**. If you wish to leave by the northern door go to **90**. If you wish to go through the western door go to **2**. If you wish to leave by the southern door go to **67**.

186. HOW TO FIGHT OHM MOLNIYA THE BLUE DRAGON

First Ohm Molniya attacks twice. For each attack roll 2d6.

If the result is 2-4 Ohm Molniya's attack misses.
5-7 the Fighter is wounded.
8-10 the Priest is wounded.
11-12 the Magician is wounded.

Adventurers die if wounded TWICE without being cured.

Then your surviving adventurers each make one attack.

The Fighter swings his or her sword, roll 2d6. If the result is 11 or more Ohm Molniya dies.

The Priest wields his or her mace, roll 2d6. If the result is 12 Ohm Molniya dies.

The Magician casts a spell, roll 2d6. If the result is 9 or more Ohm Molniya dies.

You may run away (go to **81**) or the Priest may cure a wound.

Finally, repeat all the above steps until Ohm Molniya dies (then go to **20**) or all your adventurers are dead (go to **83**).

187. You are standing in an empty room. The only features of interest are a few faded and chipped wall paintings showing scenes of conquest. If you wish to search for secret doors go to **47**. If you wish to leave by the western door go to **43**. If you wish to leave by the south-eastern door go to **6**.

188. There are no secret doors here. Go to **136**.

189. As you reach the southern door a large spider falls from above. There is no chance of escape. If you have already beaten the spider you know where to go to now, otherwise you must fight it. Go to **50** (Special Rules), **163** (D&D Rules) or **99** (T&T Rules).

190. As soon as Ohm Molniya touches the Jiggalorum of Hild a strange grey fire runs up the dragon's forearm and spreads to cover all its scales. With a shriek of agony Ohm Molniya drops the Jiggalorum — still the fire continues to burn, until there is only ash where once there was a mighty dragon. Go to **150**.

191. There are no secret doors here. Go to **29**.

192. HOW TO FIGHT THE MIMIC

First the mimic attacks. Roll 2d6.

If the result is 2-6 the mimic's attack misses;
7-8 the Fighter is wounded;
9-10 the Priest is wounded;
11 or 12 the Magician is wounded.

Adventurers die if wounded TWICE without being cured.

Then your surviving adventurers each make one attack.

The Fighter swings his or her sword, roll 2d6. If the result is 8 or more the mimic dies.

The Priest wields his or her mace, roll 2d6. If the result is 9 or more the mimic dies.

The Magician casts a spell, roll 2d6. If the result is 6 or more the mimic dies.

You may run away (go to **165**) or the Priest may cure a wound.

Finally, repeat all the above steps until the mimic dies (then go to **109**) or all your adventurers are dead (go to **133**).

193. Next time, ignore the rat and go to **137** instead (note this number down). In the rat's nest is a ring worth 40gp. Go to **137**.

194. There are no secret doors here, but hidden in the dust on one of the steps is a gilt brooch worth 75gp. You may only find one brooch, so note down the fact that you have found it, and then ignore this part of the section next in future. Go to **116**.

195. Standing next to a bronze fountain in the middle of the chamber is a large ogre. If you want to run away go to **235**. If you want to fight go to **121** (Special Rules), **567** (D&D Rules) or **990** (T&T Rules).

CREDITS

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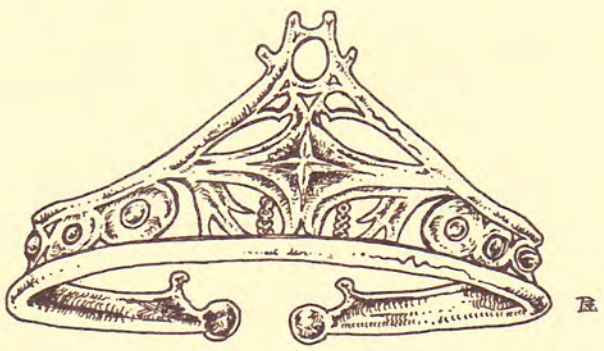

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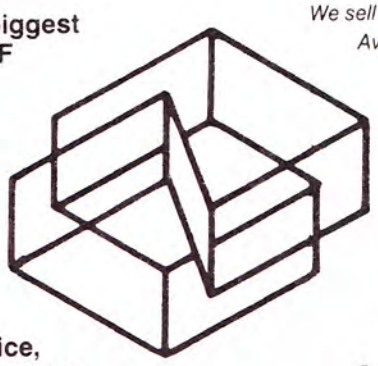

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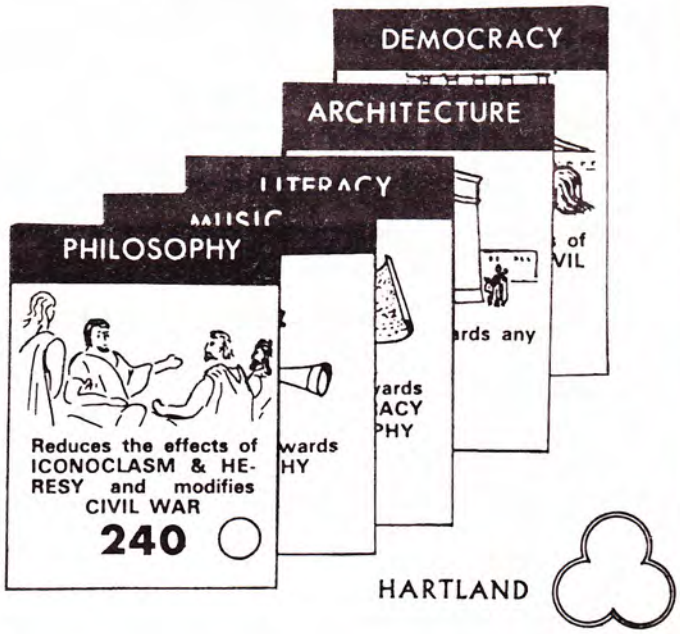

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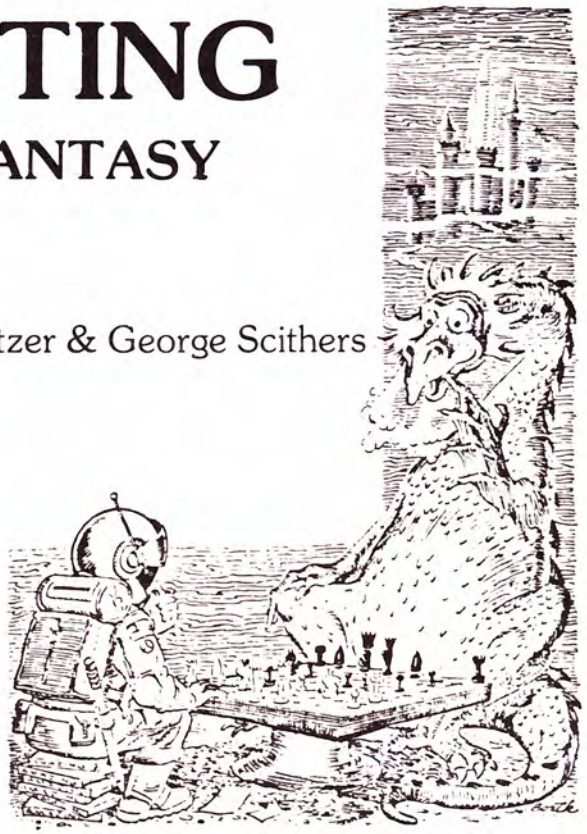

If you have ever wanted to write for this or any other magazine, this booklet, published in the USA by TSR Inc, will be invaluable.

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The PA is a club for all players of role playing games, particularly the D&D® and AD&D™ games. Since it was founded in 1981, the PA has become the country's largest D&D club, and now has this 4-page section in IMAGINE³ magazine. The benefits of membership include:

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D&D® PLAYERS ASSOCIATION NEWS

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TURNBULL TALKING

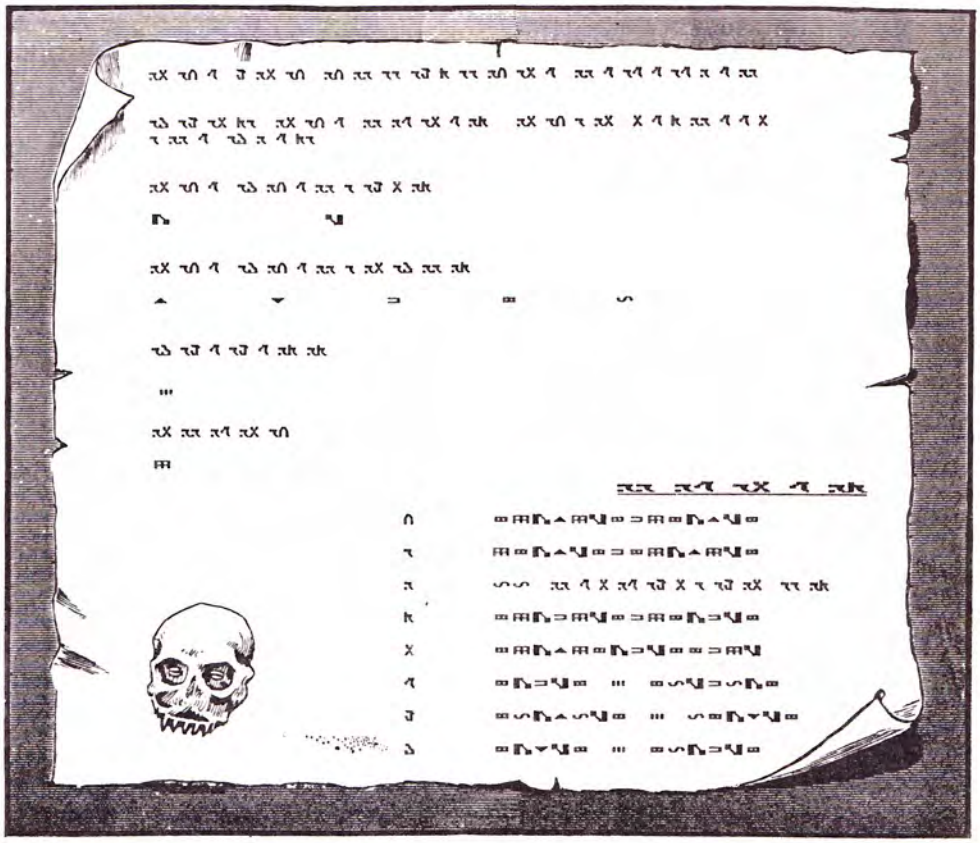
Last month, I told you about my party's discovery of the eight principles of a cult of spell-casters whose valley we were passing through. Well, towards the end of that adventure, we met the next set of puzzles. As usual we had landed ourselves in many different kinds of hot water — and one day I must tell you about Dave Tant's approach to the role-playing of a paladin — so it was somewhat to our surprise that we survived this far.

There are some new symbols here, so those of you who have already solved the first part still have work to do. Again, there is a small prize to the first solver of this set whose name is drawn out of the bag on April 1, 1984 — **The Shady Dragon Inn**, the latest D&D® game accessory — but be warned, the third and last set is not only the most difficult, it requires the answers from this set.

A clue which we had stumbled on in the course of the adventure and which I will pass on *gratis* — the cult of Math was preoccupied with fund-raising and magic, but was also rather keen, collectively, on mathematics (obviously) in some of its more unusual manifestations.

Have fun...

Don Turnbull



GAME COMPANY *Clubs Special*

This month, we are attempting to give a full listing of those RPG clubs in Great Britain that have been advertised in IMAGINE™ magazine in the last year, for those gamers who would like to meet other role-playing fans in their area. Future issues will update this information, so if you belong to a club not mentioned here, please send details to IMAGINE magazine for free advertising in these pages.

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EggOCentral aims to be a central register of anyone interested in any games, including all forms of simulation board gaming, role-playing, science fiction and fantasy gaming. Whether you want prospective opponents for face-to-face combat, weekend campaigns, postal gaming, or assistance forming the first club in your area, EggOCentral will help you to find them. Part of the service offered is to inform you of the names, addresses and interests of the six closest contacts in your area who are registered. All for the price of an SAE! The service is run by Terry Devereux and you should contact him for more details at: EggOCentral, 32 Windmill Lane, Southall, Middlesex UB2 4ND. Don't forget the SAE!

Blackburn: The PHANTASMAL FORCES FANTASY GROUP meets every Thursday night at 7.30pm in the NALGO club, 20 Lord St West. Contact G. Pearson, 0254 665898 for details.

Congleton: CHAOS TRIBE FANTASY meet at members' homes to play AD&D, RQ and 'any game that comes along'. New players, including females(!), welcome. Jeremy Nuttall, Con 4370.

Preston: The DARK CRYPT GAMING CLUB plays AD&D, D&D, RQ, Traveller and Car Wars games. It meets at members' houses, 2-7pm on Saturdays; interested parties should contact Peter Thompson, 60 Beechwood Avenue, Fulwood, Preston.

Thamesdown: Darren Hallett, 12 Lancaster Road, Wroughton, Thamesdown, Wilts will give you details of a club which meets to play the AD&D game on Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons. Last time we heard there were five 14-year-old players.

Bristol: Contact John Nash, 84 Henleaze Road, Henleaze, Bristol BS9 4JY for details of a fantasy/SF games club that meets at players' houses weekly, with a hall available for bigger events. Anyone welcome.

Gosport: GOSPORT WARGAMING CLUB meets Friday evenings, Saturdays and other times to play D&D and Traveller games. Contact David Burgess, 3 Beech Grove, Alverstoke, Gosport, Hants PO12 2EJ.

Portsmouth: SOUTH HANTS ASSOCIATION OF DOWN & OUT WEREGAMERS — SHADOW — meets 2-10pm every Saturday at Portsmouth Community Centre, Buckland. They have 20 members playing AD&D, RQ and GAMMA WORLD games, plus board wargames etc. Contact Mark Byng, 17 Church Rd, Landport, Portsmouth, Hants, PO1 1QA.

Rugby: The DUNSMORE DRAGONSLAYERS — a new club meeting twice weekly at secretary James Leaviss' school to play D&D, RuneQuest, T&T, Traveller, etc. The 20-25 members get 10% discount from a local games dealer. Write to James at 130 Ashlawn Road, Rugby, Warks CV22 5EP.

Notts, Derby & Leics: NOTTINGHAM & DERBY BOARDGAMES CLUB meets Thursdays, 7 - 10.45pm, at Queens Walk Community Centre. Ring Nigel Hawthorn on 0602 53313.

Exeter: EXETER UNIVERSITY GAMING CLUB meets on Sundays (term-time only), 2-11pm in Cornwall House, Exeter University.

Newquay: The LORDS OF CAHLI are a group of gamers in their 'teens — apart from Big Kev, who is over 30 — who meet to play D&D, Traveller and GAMMA WORLD games every Sunday at players' houses. Contact Kevin Robinson (High Lord of Cahli) St Mary's, West Pentire Road, Crantock, Newquay, Cornwall.

Chichester: The RINGWRAITHS of Chichester meet at the Fernleigh Centre, North St, Chichester every Friday from 7 - 10.30 pm, to play any FRP game including D&D, RQ, C&S, Champions, Cthulhu, etc. Current membership is over 70 — contact Chairperson Sue Turner (Bognor Regis 864064) or Secretary Paul Barnetson (Chichester 527898) for details about joining.

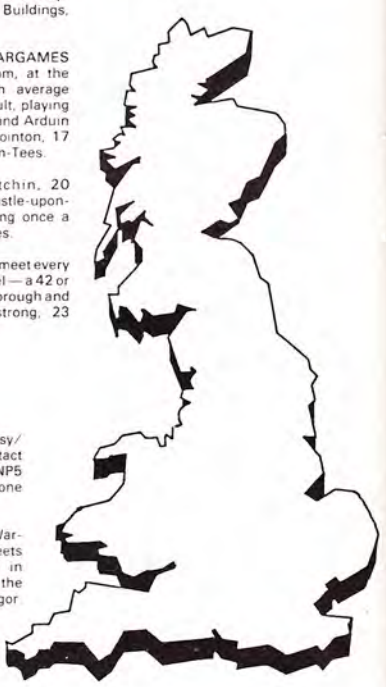
Guildford: Rowan Wilson contacted us some time back to enquire whether anyone in his area would help set up a club to play Traveller or any other RPG game. Contact him at 7 Rozledene, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6TW to see how it went.

Scarborough: SCARBOROUGH WARGAMES CLUB meets every Saturday afternoon at the Technical College annexe, 2-6 pm, to play many different games. Membership is £2.50 for a year, or one can go to individual sessions for 20p. Contact John Hinchcliffe, 5 Futurist Buildings, Foreshore Rd, Scarborough.

Stockton-on-Tees: ELMWOOD WARGAMES CLUB meets every Tuesday, 6-10pm, at the Elmwood Community Centre, with average attendance 25 players age 11 to adult, playing AD&D, Traveller, RQ, TOP SECRET and Arduin Grimoire games. Contact Andrew Pointon, 17 Seamer Grove, Hartburn, Stockton-on-Tees.

Newcastle: Contact Stuart Ketchin, 20 Woodburn Avenue, Fenham, Newcastle-upon-Tyne 4, for details of a club meeting once a month at weekends at players' houses.

Sheffield: SHEFFIELD RUNELORDS meet every Monday from 7pm at the Victoria Hotel — a 42 or 53 bus ride from town towards Hillsborough and Parson Cross. Contact Pete Armstrong, 23 Bramley Lane, Sheffield.



Raglan: Players interested in playing fantasy/SF RPGs, or computer games, should contact John Tribe, Hill House, Raglan, GWENT NP5 2GT. The 15-strong club meets weekly; anyone else interested would be welcome.

Bangor: University College of N Wales Wargames and Role-playing games Club meets every Friday and Saturday during term in members rooms. 'We play *anything*'. Contact the Secretary, Students' Union, Deiniol Rd, Bangor.

Horsham: Write to Andy Norman for details of a club in this area which meets at players' houses weekly to play D&D, T&T, C&S, DRAGONQUEST and Traveller games. The group mainly consists of A-level students or undergrads. Players 18+ welcomed to write to 1 Reapers Close, Wimblehurst Park, Horsham, W. Sussex.

Worthing: WORTHING GAMES CLUB meets on the first and third Sundays of the month at 2pm in the Trades Council Building, Broadwater Road, to play AD&D and TOP SECRET games. Contact Matt Haydon, 56 Bulkington Ave, Worthing, Sussex.

Deptford: The DEPTFORD ADULT GAMES GROUP meets at the Community Centre, Idonia Street, on the first and third Sunday of every month at 3pm. Interested in a game of Creature Castle, or Wooden Ships and Iron Men? Contact the chairman, Kendall Johns.

Maidstone: Gamers should definitely try to get more friendly with the landlord of the Rose & Crown, High Street, West Malling. He, his wife, three cats and someone called Ken Hay are trying to run a face-to-face Diplomacy campaign, plus D&D games in the pub! It sells real ale too.

DIALOG

*You've read the books, played the game; now our American correspondent, **Lew Pulsipher**, takes a look at the cartoon...*

Being a kind master, I allow my Alter Ego to have Saturday mornings off, even though I am up and working at 8.00. One morning he watched the cartoon shows on TV — something he used to do a lot, but not in the past several years. So when he came through my study heading for his dungeon 'office', I asked what he'd been watching.

'DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, what else?'

'You don't mean people were playing the D&D game on TV! How boring.' (After all, it is not a spectator sport, except for the occasional oddball like myself who is interested in the psychological make-up of the players. There was once a vociferous group of gamers in the US who wanted to turn board wargaming into a professional sport, but that foolishness is another story.)

'Don't be square, Puls. I mean the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS cartoon show.'

'Say on, Alter. I hadn't known...'

'Well, it's an animated half-hour show about six kids, say age 8 to 16, who take a trip into a carnival 'tunnel of terror' — you know, the kind where it's dark, and spooky noises are played and lights suddenly show on wild-looking statues that sometimes move — and somehow they're sucked through a dimensional warp into somewhere else. Immediately they're chased by a dragon — Tiamat herself! — but a little guy who looks suspiciously like Yoda magically provides them with the equipment and skills of adventurers — a ranger, magic user, cavalier, acrobat and barbarian.'

'No cleric?'

'No cleric. Maybe E G G was worried about the religious fundamentalists and wanted to keep religion out of it. Anyway, the six flee from the dragon, then meet a hostile magic user on a winged horse. The dragon goes for the MU, who chases it off. Then the little guy welcomes the kids to "the world of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS" — he is "Dungeonmaster", their guide. And he'll give them clues to help them find a way home.'

'Good grief, this sounds dire,' I said.

'Oh, no, Puls, it's no worse than **Thundar the Barbarian** or **Blackstar** or the other superhero/science fantasy stuff they've been showing Saturday mornings for years. There's some humour to help make up for the inconsistencies of action — sometimes the kids put up a fight, sometimes they get captured without a whimper. The MU doesn't have any spells, so he just chants over his conical hat and pulls out something he hopes will be helpful. The barbarian is the 8-year-old, there's a miniature unicorn they picked up, and so on. The monsters are often right out of the AD&D game, so the audience can identify the programme with the game despite the use of so many character classes that aren't in the published rules. And it's rather like a 'Comics Code' comic book — nobody gets killed, not even the badguys. So it might not offend those who complain about crime-breeding violence on TV.'

'It's kind of surprising that there's any resemblance to the D&D game at all, considering what Hollywood usually does to books.'

'I have it from several sources that EGG has spent a lot of time in Southern California working on the programme. Some say he's helping to write it, but in the three weeks I've seen he's only been listed as Co-Producer.'

Harold Wood, Essex: HAROLD WOOD WARGAMERS are 30 gamers aged 11-35 who meet to play D&D, RQ, GAMMA WORLD, GANGBUSTERS and En Garde games. They meet at the Scout Hut in Queen's Park Rd, Harold Wood, Sundays 2-7pm. Contact Ian Lee, 49 Fleet Avenue, Upminster, Essex.

Wooburn Green: SOUTH BUCKS FRP GROUP meets 7-11pm on alternate Tuesdays, and 1aam onwards one Sunday each month. Contact Hartley Patterson, 10 Waterside, Wooburn Green, Bucks, for details.

High Wycombe: Contact Stephen Easton, 6 Sedgemoor Rd, Flackwell Heath, Bucks HP10 9AU, for details of a club which meets in the British Legion Hall on Wednesdays, 7-10.30pm, to play the AD&D game and others.

Brize Norton: At the CARTERON WARGAMES CLUB they play all RPGs and wargames every Sunday from 2pm onwards, in the Brize Norton Community Centre, Carteron, near Witney. Contact Steve Chicken on Carteron 843729.

Hockley: A club for players of the AD&D game meets on Monday and Tuesday nights, 7-10pm, at the Hockley Youth Centre. Membership is free. Contact Rick Auger, 11 Foxfield Close, Hockley.

Haverhill: An experienced DM asked for gamers to play AD&D and BOOT HILL games. Contact Jem Ward, c/o 32 High Street, Haverhill. Tel: 0440 705711 Ext 2.

Buntingford: AD&D games are played regularly at a school youth wing. Contact Andrew Mulley, 30 Monks Walk, Buntingford, Herts.

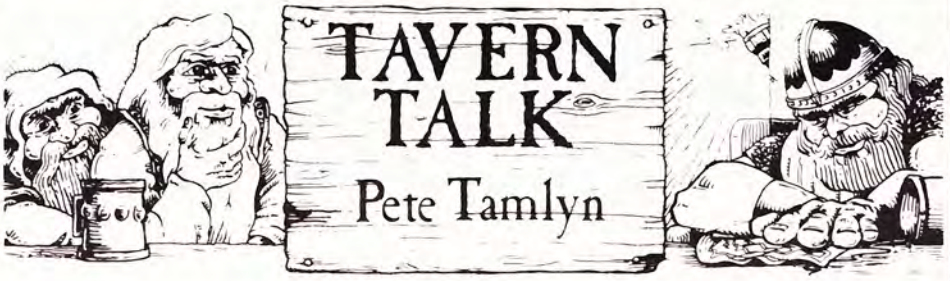
London: THE FOUNDATION club aims to promote Fantasy/SF RPGs and computer gaming, and run book and comics clubs. Contact David Hodson, 104 Debden, Gloucester Road, London N17 6LN for more details.

Finchley: A recently-advertised club in N London aimed to start a campaign at 1st level, and play a couple of times a month. 'Experienced, non-sexist players preferred.' Contact Geof Hogan, 01-346 8707 for details.

Covent Garden, London: The SIGMA GAMES CLUB meets every 2nd and 4th Sunday, 3-11.30pm, at 3-5 The Piazza, Covent Garden. Members pay £1 each session, non-members £1.50. The club has its own stock of games, or you can play any game you care to take along.

London: Clive Bailey and Joe Dever of Games Workshop have started up a games club which meets in the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC2, on at least two Saturdays in each month, from 10am to 5pm. There will be an AD&D game mini-tournament, fantasy and SF tabletop battles, a Runequest Tavern Tussle, a Traveller game and much more. Details from Joe at London Games Club, c/o 27/29 Sunbeam Road, LONDON NW10 6JP.

Quest: This is a contact service for role-players which offers an easy way to find new players, DMs, pen-pals and clubs. Contact Trevor Graver, QUEST, 2 Essex Court, Hammersmith Grove, Hammersmith, London W6 for a registration form. All you will have to do is fill it in and send it to Trevor along with a cheque or postal order for £1.50. Everyone on the register will get quarterly listings of gamers and clubs.



Helen French, doncha just love her? *(Helen's letter appeared in* #11) Well I do, anyway. 'Poisonous Toerag'? My dear, I'm a gossip columnist, I have to be mean occasionally, and it warms the cockles of my non-existent heart that you find me so good at my job. Keep the fan mail coming.

But I do seem to have upset a lot of people of late, and perhaps it is time to do something about it. The cause of Ms French's ire seems to have been my vicious attack on that warm and wonderful furry creature, SuperMole. I would like to say now that I apologise most sincerely for all the nasty words, and for dropping the ferret down his burrow. Why? Well, for one reason he seems remarkably adept at digging up embarrassing stories about TSR which I can recycle in the **Acolyte** gossip column. Also I had forgotten the terrible conditions under which he has to work. According to his last column he didn't even rate a freebie ticket to **Games Day**....

Also on the 'distraught and outraged' list is Chris Baylis who 'phoned up to say that he and the **Dragonlords**™ team are the best of friends and that all the arguments in print are just their way of showing it. I understand, Chris, I do.

Mentioning **DragonLords**©GW reminds me that one of the many things that popped through my letterbox over Christmas was a sample copy of **Demon's Drawl** of which the most interesting part was the apparent air of anti-**DL** backlash. Mike and Ian have come a long way in the last year, from being the wittiest and most intelligent fanzine around to semi-professional status. Unsurprisingly younger fanzine editors just coming onto the scene can't see what is so much better about DL. Superficially there isn't that much, and they'll take flak because of it, but they've also been doing what they do regularly and reliably for 20 issues, which in RPG fanzine terms is pretty impressive. They've also done a lot for the hobby in general on the way (and continue to do so; witness the team-up issue which does little for them but is marvellous publicity for **Q&Q**). I think they deserve their success, and I hope that their recent elevation to the ranks of establishment figures won't distance them too much from the rest of us.

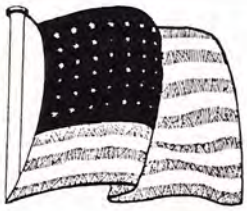
Now for something completely different. A funny thing happened to me while doing my Christmas shopping. I wandered into *Hamleys* to buy a teddy bear for my niece (even us poisonous toerags have a soft spot somewhere) and some familiar letters caught my eye: 'TM'. Aha, I thought, where they are, can 'AD&D' be far in front? And so it was, attached to a mindboggling range of 4" high, bendy figures. Just the sort of thing that you wouldn't want to be seen dead using on an expedition. And do you know, instead of just calling the figures 'dwarf' or 'wizard', each has been given a name, and that name has a trademark. Just imagine™, if this continues, you won't be able to play anything except the AD&D game as you won't be able to find a character name that isn't in breach of copyright!

Still with the season of goodwill, spare any Christmas cheer you might have left over for poor old (but not as old as Uncle Don) Dave Langford. Not only did he make a complete mess of a useful piece of gossip (and my Irish whiskey looked suspiciously like a pint of bitter when he bought it), but in the very same issue he is voted the third most loathsome thing in the **Drain**. I'm pleased to note that none of the philistines who responded to the questionaire buys or reads Acolyte.

I've got hold of some booking forms for **SeaCon** at last, and can reveal that the list of famous nams failing to outdrink Langford, Hoare et al also includes Anne McCaffrey, Gene Wolfe and Julian May. And me, of course. What with that and GamesFair, I think April is likely to disappear in an alcoholic haze....

(See Paul, I can do it, I got through the column without mentioning **Heartquest**™ once.)

Pete Tamlyn



'Which can be anything from a substantial job to an honorific,' I added.

'Well, there's a Producer and two Executive Producers, which might not leave much undone. I was never sure what a producer does, anyway.'

'How's the animation?'

'Not Walt Disney, but good by current standards, a fair bit of movement. Those awful cartoon strips in **WHITE DWARF, IMAGINE**™ and **DRAGON**® magazines can't compare.'

'Come on, Alter, the drawings aren't so bad in some of those strips.'

'Yeah, sometimes; anyway, comics have no place in games magazines.'

'Well, magazine editors seem to believe that people would rather look at pictures than read things — they can't all be wrong, can they?' I confess I agreed with Alter, but it doesn't do to let him think he's right all the time.

'Think how much better those magazines would be if they printed good articles in the space they waste on comics,' said Alter. 'Or if they need humour, why not start a reader-contributed column of game-related jokes? Surely their readers can make up good ones, especially puns. And that way they don't have to pay anyone for trash —'

'Alter!'

'OK, for "material unsuitable for games magazines". And if they have a good man to edit the jokes column it'd be much funnier than those comics. Remember Clive Booth's joke competitions in **Chimaera**? Great stuff.'

'You're not going to offer yourself as editor?'

'Naw, I can't even remember jokes, let alone make 'em up or edit 'em.'

'Anyway, back to the cartoon. Do you recommend it to people who read game magazines?'

'I guess anyone who enjoys comic books or TV cartoons will like it. And it's worth looking at once just to see what's happening to the young. But it'll probably get boring after a while....'

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Later, as I read **White Dwarf** and Alter was sorting through one of the file cabinets in my study, I sighed. Alter is always looking for an excuse to stop working, so he asked, 'What's up, Puls?'

'I seem to have become notorious, Alter. Look at this survey return. They asked "Is there anything you really loath about White Dwarf?", and there in sixth place is "Lew Pulsipher".'

Alter looked. 'Maybe that's why we haven't heard from Games Workshop in months. And one of their cartoons and the book review column were ahead of you in... loathsomeness? I don't see why anyone wouldn't like **Critical Mass**.'

'Well, no one who does anything worth doing can avoid offending people. I suspect all the discussions in the letter column have something to do with it, but when the editors make a career of printing critical (and sometimes ridiculous) letters, I have to respond, don't I?'

'Sure Puls, and it doesn't help that they cut articles to fit their pages exactly. Especially when they cut the qualifiers intended to make items less, er, authoritarian? You're defending what they made you say, not necessarily what you said.'

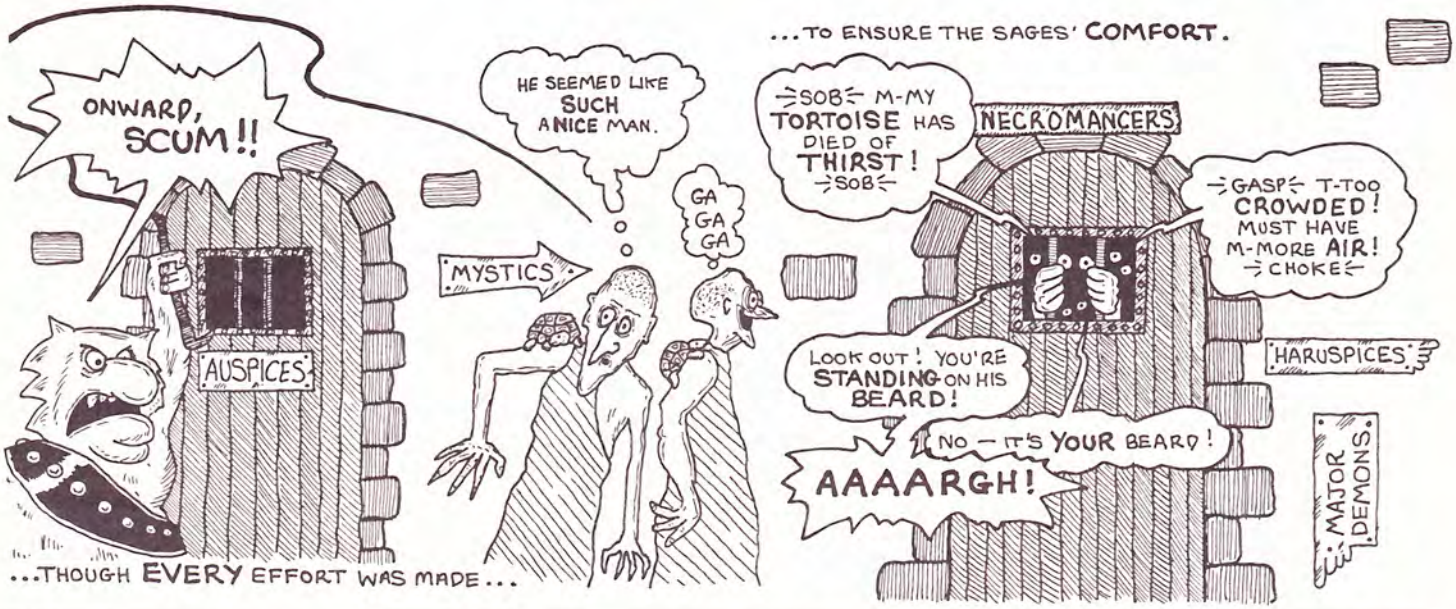
'Thanks for the support, Alter. Take the rest of the day off. In fact, we'll both take the rest of the day off.'

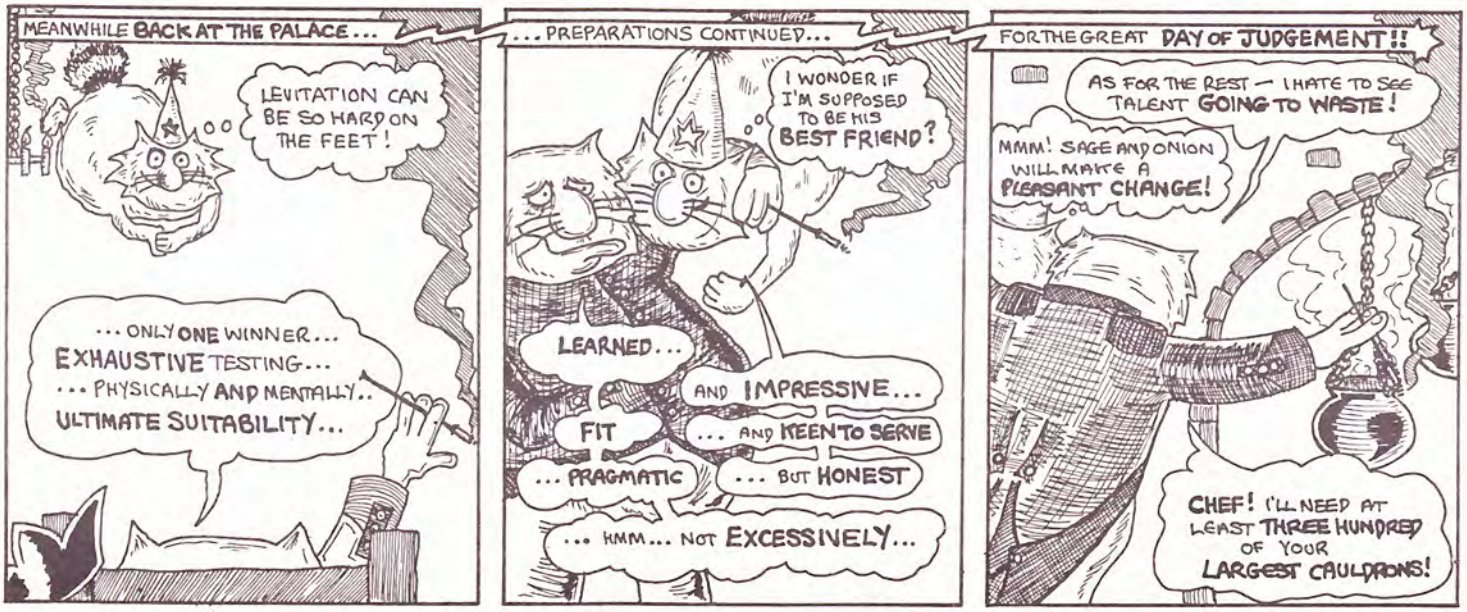
Lew Pulsipher

BALERIC OF MOGGEDON

THE SAGES HEARD THE CHALLENGE SPOKE,
THEY LISTENED AND THEY GAVE FULL HEED.
THEIR CAVES THEY LEFT, ADEPTS BEREFT,
FOR EACH BELIEVED THE PRIZE HIS MEED.
– TRADITIONAL –

NO STONE WAS LEFT UNTURNED...
=ULP!= GHOULS!
NOTICES
DONT FEAR THE REAPER.
EXCISE
ALF, THAT ONE AIN'T NO SAGE. I THINK 'E'S TRYING TO SMUGGLE CATACLYSMS AGAIN!
...AND THE RESOURCES OF MOGGEDON WERE STRETCHED TO THE LIMIT...




MEANWHILE BACK AT THE PALACE...
LEVITATION CAN BE SO HARD ON THE FEET!
...ONLY ONE WINNER...
EXHAUSTIVE TESTING...
...PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY...
ULTIMATE SUITABILITY...
...PREPARATIONS CONTINUED...
I WONDER IF I'M SUPPOSED TO BE HIS BEST FRIEND?
LEARNED...
AND IMPRESSIVE...
FIT
... AND KEEN TO SERVE
...PRAGMATIC
... BUT HONEST
... HMM... NOT EXCESSIVELY...
FOR THE GREAT DAY OF JUDGEMENT!!
AS FOR THE REST – I HATE TO SEE TALENT GOING TO WASTE!
MMM! SAGE AND ONION WILL MAKE A PLEASANT CHANGE!
CHEF! I'LL NEED AT LEAST THREE HUNDRED OF YOUR LARGEST CAULDRONS!

Fanzine Reviews

Every now and again one feels the urge to do something new. So, just to present a new slant on this section, we've invited a guest reviewer to look at some of the amateur publications out early in 1984. And who better than the editor of the zine that won the '83 Zine Poll, the L A Raiders of fanzinedom, ***Pete Birks*** *of* ***Greatest Hits****. Cue tape, roll....*

At the top of my list for postal games players is **Hopscotch**. Not only does Alan Parr smoothly run such diverse games as **Sopwith, Mystic Wood, Railway Rivals, Plutonomy** and his own Soccerleague variant, **United**, but also includes some witty chat and news about the hobby at large. Add to this a layout which clearly tells both player and casual reader where everything is likely to be, and you have a zine that performs everything that a zine should perform.

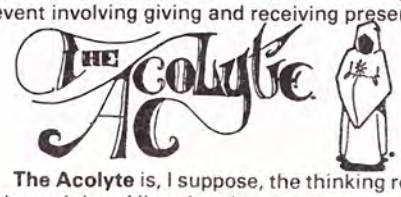
Railway Rivals was invented by David Watts, who, via his zine **Rostherne Games Review** (formerly **Railway Rivals Recorder**) has waged a virtually solo campign against non-games material, bad language, anything but the most basic layout, and irreverant sods like me who fail to bow obsequiously when the word 'boardgame' is uttered. David has recently taken early retirement from his teaching post, so his interest in publishing his own game can be assumed to be continuing. We've had the Middle Earth map — when the One Tree map? the Mystic Wood map? the Newcastle Metro map?

Why I should mention **Panzerkreuser**, I'm not sure. Mike Sharpe is a complete disgrace to the hobby, the University of Essex and humanity in general. However, the zine is quite a jolly little read, if you like **United, Diplomacy** and tales of the average drunken student at university. Work? Don't you believe it.

Someone aiming for a life of massive grant and idle time is Steve Norledge, who aims to replace Pete Northcott (once of **Last Stand**) as the youngest looking person at the Lamb Hobbymeet. His zine, **Rapscallion** (affectionately known as **Rapso**, unaffectionately known as a number of things) is the first thus far mentioned which is not mimeographed, but reduced photocopied. The talk in #4 is of University interviews (he was rejected by Bristol), fantasy chat, Tanith Lee books, a 'Prisoner' rpg, a music quiz, and a letter column discussing prozines, pop music, and Edgar Allen Poe. What more could one ask?

NMR! claims to be 'the zine that's close to the edge' a label I had always hoped to copyright for **Greatest Hits**. After its special 'fantasy' issue, it is still attracting flak from the 'serious' role-players. #46 has a letter from one Andrew Glynn, writing of Pete Tamlyn: 'he seems to be a b***** nutter'. There then follows a comment by another subscriber which certainly wouldn't pass the blue-pencillers at **IMAGINE™** magazine. On the whole, I think **NMR!** would be a mite elitist and cliquey for the average reader of this magazine, but if you live in London, like decent beer, and are prepared to dig a little deeper into the fanzine world, it would prove one of your most rewarding incursions.

Not so much close to the edge as over the top is the aforementioned Tamlyn's **Acolyte**, continuing to shoot from the hip and relishing the flak at a later date. A slight idea of Mr Tamlyn's attitude to life might be gleaned from the first two lines of #53, where he refers to Saturnalia rather than that later, and rather more vulgar, event involving giving and receiving presents.



The Acolyte is, I suppose, the thinking role-players' zine. All-embracing questions such as whether it is possible to take on the role of a character with whom you have no empathy; or whether alignment has any place in an rpg; or to what extent, indeed, one must 'live' one's character; or even if you come across a Kentucky Fried Chicken store on the 5th floor of Cthulhu's castle, whether you should order coleslaw on the side.

It is an undeniable fact that one is often biased in favour of zines in which one is playing, although it may be that the reason you started playing the game in the first place was because you liked the zine.... Well, whatever, **Mercurius Aulicus**, from Paul McGivern, noted Newcastle darts player, drinker of Exhibition (whence the phrase 'to make an Exhibition of oneself'), and supporter of the Jacobite Restoration, is one of my favourite zines. If I tell you that the editor's dateline is called 'The View From Edgehill', and that one of the games Paul is running is called 'The Great Rebellion', then you might guess that Paul is keen on the Civil War. I'm sure that if walking two miles to the pub every night didn't exhaust him, he'd join the Sealed Knot — so long as the Royalists won every time. MA is keenly recommended for its laconic sense of humour (for example, 'I had a dart for a 15 dart 501 last week.... unfortunately I failed to get the 437 required....').

One would imagine that a zine featuring a front cover picture of Joseph Stalin with rabbit's ears pointing out of his head (Big Bunny is watching you) would be run a person certifiably insane. Bryan Betts, however, is uncomfortably normal — indeed my girlfriend says he reminds her of me (or would do if he didn't have much longer legs — ta, love....). One of the Warwick University layabouts, Bryan runs **En Garde!, Judge Dredd** and others in his A5 reduced zine. Its name? Well, **Masters of the Prime**, officially, but #11 seems to be titled **Flopsy, Mopsy and the Class Struggle**.

Another relatively sane zine is **Home of the Brave**, which Geoff Challinger produces to an admirably professional level considering its A4 mimeo production. Mainly postal **Diplomacy**, but worth getting for the quizzes, occasional articles (such as #33's appreciation of John Morgan, commentator on Radio 4's **The World Tonight**) and subzine **Serendipity** from world famous Krypton Factor winner John Webley, dentist extraordinaire, proud new father and non-qualifier in the Midcon quiz....

One seemingly 'way out' zine is **The Church Mouse**, produced by Dave Thomas, games-player and amateur theatrical type. He also organises a regular games day con in Stanley, Co Durham. **The Church Mouse**, after you negotiate its rather weird layout, inventive titling and pseudo-punk attitude to life, really has an interesting, conservative content. #18 writes of **Sopwith**, Midcon, and 'Lose Your Shirt' (Golden Oldie review), as well as including a games quiz (all the rage at the moment), cartoons, scrabble and a games-orientated letter column. Highly recommended.

The foregoing has simply been a random flip through the pile of zines a foot-high to the right of my typewriter. Space precludes me mentioning many other eminently readable zines, so, here, a brief appendix:

Gazfinc is a zine using the latest high-tech hardware, produced by Richard Bairstow on a VDU, slapped onto the printer while he makes a coffee, and photocopied by his secretary.... **Inflammatory Material** is the new zine from Simon 'I want to be famous' Billenness. Should be one of the best. **Perspiring Dreams** is the zine from ace statistician John Dodds. **Zine To Be Believed** is a great place to play games, a good read, and a useful place to find out what has been happening in the hobby. **Ode**, ex Zine Poll winner specialises in the hideously complicated **Mercator**, a **Diplomacy** variant with about 20 sub-variants. Another Mercator zine is the foolscap **Road Goes Ever On**, from Aussie-lover Gary Piper. **Mad Policy**, from Richard Walkerdine, concentrates on **Diplomacy**, but occasionally reprints articles from the past — usually to the embarrassment of the author. ***Pete Birks***

Also received: the excellent **Dragonlords/ Quasits & Quasars** team up, a bumper edition of **Psycho, War Machine** and **Wargame News, Walamalaysia Gazette**, which carried a reprint of the latest Moral Majority nonsense from Enfield, **Oink**, the fast improving **Journal of the SCS**, the ever-diagonal **Tales From Tanelorn**, the brand new **GamesMaster** and something called **Greatest Hits**. Thanks again to Pete for all the above.... and to all those brave souls who send their zines in.

Addresses: **Hopscotch**, Alan Parr, 6 Longfield Gardens, Tring, Herts HP23 4DN; **Rostherne Games Review**, David Watts, 102 Priory Rd, Milford Haven, Dyfed, Wales; **Panzerkreuser**, Mike Sharpe, 'Sandy Brae', Stonleigh Rd, Blackdown, Leamington Spa, Warwicks CV23 6QR; **Rapscallion**, Steve Norledge, 75 Hawkhurst Way, W Wickham, Kent BR4 9PE; **NMR!**, Brian Creese, 256 Canbury Pk Rd, Kingston, Surrey KT2 6LG; **The Acolyte**, Pete Tamlyn, 2 Poplar Rd, The Coppice, Aylesbury, Bucks; **Mercurius Aulicus**, Paul McGivern, 11 Airdale, Hadrian Lodge West, Wallsend, Newcastle on Tyne NE28 8TL; **Mopsy**, Bryan Betts, 48 Cotham Vale, Redland, Bristol BS6 6QE; **Home of the Brave**, Geoff Challinger, 117 Shrubbery Road, S Darenth, Kent DA4 9AP; **The Church Mouse**, Dave Thomas, 16 Ballater Close, Burnside, Stanley, Co. Durham; **Gazfinc**, Richard Bairstow, 20 Queen's Drive, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6PP; **Inflammatory Material**, Simon Billenness, 20 Winifred Rd, Coulsdon, Surrey CR3 3JA; **Perspiring Dreams**, John Dodds, 47 Mossford Lane, Barkingside, Essex IG6 2JA; **Zine To Be Believed**, Nick Kinzett, 11 Daleway Rd, Green Lane, Coventry CV3 6SF; **Ode**, John Marsden, 14 East Ascent, St Leonard's, Hastings, E Sussex TN38 0DS; **The Road Goes Ever On**, Gary Piper, 5a Billing Rd, North'ptn; **Mad Policy**, Richard Walkerdine, 144 Stoughton Rd, Guildford, Surrey GU2 6PG; **Dragonlords**, Ian Marsh, Avalon, Grams Rd, Walmer, Kent CT14 7PU; **Quasits & Quasars**, Dave Hulks, 54 Slimmons Drive, Marshalswick, St Albans, Herts AL4 9AP; **Psycho**, Mike Dean, 32 Newlands Ave, Scarborough, N Yorks YO12 6PS; **Wargame News / War Machine**, Mike Costello, Emjay, 17 Langbank Ave, Rise Park, Notts NG5 5BU; **Oink**, Dave Messenger, 3 The Leasow, Aldridge, Walsall, W Midlands WS9 0EF; **Walamalaysia Gazette**, Dave Thorby, 200 Lavender Hill, Enfield, Middx EN2 8NJ; **Journal of the Senseless Carnage Society**, Simon Hartley, 5 Burgh Heath Rd, Epsom, Surrey; **Tales From Tanelorn**, Matt Williams, Tanelorn, 24 Moor St, Earlsdon, Coventry CV5 6EQ; **GamesMaster**, Steve Fielding, 262 Beake Ave, Radford, Coventry CV6 2JR;

and of course, **Greatest Hits**, Pete Birks, 65 Turney Rd, London SW21 7JB.

Enchantment for Beginners

by Chris Felton

When (sorry: IF) magic-users reach the lofty heights of twelfth level, they are entitled to begin manufacture of magical items. They are thrown into their laboratories by the rest of the party with entreaties not to emerge until they have finished that **vorpal frost brand** or the hobbit-sized **leather armour +22** of **invisibility, water breathing, feather falling, trap detection, giant strength, speed** and **proof against poison**. They enter their labs, cast **enchant an item** on a sword, then **enchanted weapon** to make it +1, another to make it +2, a third to put it up to +3, and then start wondering why, if it is this easy, people bother making 'ordinary' **swords+1**. Of course, it's not that easy.

All magical items made by magic users require the **enchant an item** spell, so if it fails the magic user is in real trouble. One-shot items such as the **javelin of lightning bolts** or the **slingbullet of fireball** are fairly simple: just work out the exact variant of the **enchantment** required, cast **enchant** and the spell required, and throw! Charged items are almost as easy: **enchant, limited wish**, a sample of the spell to be cast out of the item, and as many of the spells as the caster cares to put into it (each of which, if the item makes its saving throw, becomes one charge). The caster will not know how many of the charges he put in have become charges stored in the item. When the magic user breaks the inputting sequence, the enchantment ends and the item will then be ready for use. If the item is to be rechargeable, a full **wish** must be exchanged for the limited version.

This works for simple items like **wands of magic missiles** or **magic detection**. Items intended to have a continual function (**ring of feather falling, eversmoking bottle**) must have **enchant**, the appropriate spell(s) (in the case of the bottle, they are **produce flame** and **pyrotechnics**), and **permanency**. (NB: Chaotic evil DMs may decide that the manufacturer was not willing to risk the possible constitution drain of **permanency** and make the party's **ring of feather falling** a charged item...).

Most powerful items (**staff of the archmage**) or those with multiple functions (**wand of fire**) are even more difficult, requiring far more research and probably several wishes in the manufacturing process. The exact specifications must be worked out by the DM for each item, but as an example, here are my rules for the manufacture of magical weapons.

Firstly, the research must be done. The first phase of research is to wander around all the magic users you know, and the sages in town, to find out if their grimoires contain any details on the manufacture of the items you are interested in. Obviously, if one of your friends has the notes of a magic user who has made the same item, all it will need is to negotiate the cost with them. Otherwise, you must research into the subject for 6-36 months, or longer for the more difficult items. If you have the notes of a magic user who was researching into the same process it will take 1-12 months off the research time needed, and if you are working from a similar item manufacturing process (you have the notes on making a **javelin of lightning** but want to make a **slingbullet of the fireball**) it will take only 2-16 months.

Tip for the Chaotic Evil DM: You may decide that the manufacturer of a **ring of feather falling** was unwilling to risk a **permanency**, and made the ring a charged item...

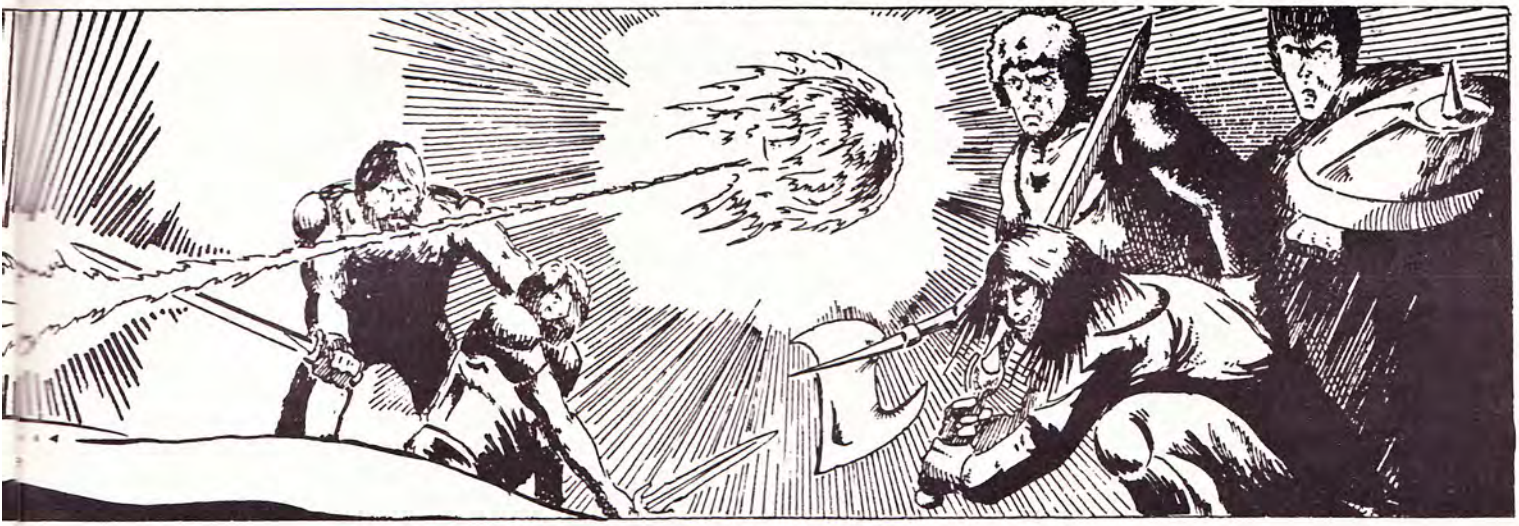
The item to be enchanted must be of the finest possible quality; a +1 weapon, before enchantment, will cost ten times the amount charged for the standard item, and the prices go up appropriately as more expensive alloys are used, until a +5 longsword must be made of pure mithril, which costs 9600gp for the metal and 1200gp for the four months work by the best Master Swordsmith, assuming six pounds of mithril are available. Gems in the hilt, decorative carvings and so on are showy and can be included if the maker so desires, but they interfere with the simple lines of the weapon and upset the weapon's efficiency in most cases. This will not matter with a mere +1 or +2 weapon, but except in unusual circumstances (such as Hawk the Slayer's mindstone) really good swords will have classically simple lines. Dragon hilts holding big black pearls in the dragon's mouth may please a Black Dragonslayer, but a Vorpal sword would scorn such fripperies.

Likewise, wooden items are best made from the wood of a firm thousand-year-old yew, carved by a master carpenter into simple lines (but don't let the druids catch you taking the wood). Composite items such as battleaxes are more difficult to make, as the carpenter for the handle and the master dwarven smith for the blade must be brought together and the weapon must be worked by the two craftsmen. What the weapon is does not change the enchantment: a dwarven **flame tongue** battleaxe is as easy to make as a longsword once the high-quality weapon has been manufactured.

Once the weapon is in hand, the enchanting can begin. First the **enchant an item** spell is cast, then the spells to provide its power. The required spells are:

+1 weapon: **enchanted weapon, permanency**
+2 weapon: **enchanted weapon** x2, **limited wish, permanency**
+3 weapon: **enchanted weapon** x3, **wish, permanency, extension III**
+4 weapon: **enchanted weapon** x4, **wish** x2, **extension III, permanency**
+5 weapon: **divine intervention** on a +4 weapon

The various wishes are to make the **enchanted weapon** spells cumulative, and the **extension** is to keep the first two enchanted weapons tied down while the next ones are placed on top of them. The **divine intervention** must come from the deity the magic user worships and must have the clearance of the appropriate deity in charge of the manufacture of weapons: Hephaestus in the Greek pan-



theon; Moradin, the dwarf-god, in the Norse (who don't have a god of blacksmiths, as the dwarves produce all the great magical items), and so on.

To give a weapon powers requires a **wish** for each prime ability, plus lesser enchantments which depend on the ability being sought: **detect secret doors** takes **wizard eye**, **detect gems** requires **locate object** plus **clairvoyance**, and so on. Extraordinary powers need even more care on the more difficult enchantments, and the enchantment requires the appropriate part of some creature with the ability (fresh, of course), **enchant an item**, the spell concerned, **polymorph any object**, and **wish**. Thus to make a weapon which teleports into the owner's hand takes the weapon enchantment, then before the **permanency** is cast (the spells may need more extending, which may take another **limited wish**), the magic user must **polymorph** the fresh cerebral cortex of a Type 3 demon into a suitable form (such as the leather of the handgrip), **enchant** that separately, cast **teleport** onto it, **wish** that the sword has this power, bind it onto the main body of the sword with a **mending**, and top off the enchantment with the **permanency**. Such an ability can only be given to an intelligent sword with telepathic ability, or it will not know when it is required.

A weapon with special purpose is made in a similar way, but **divine intervention** is required. An intelligent sword requires a **monster summoning** spell, **cacodemon, gate,** or **conjure elemental** to produce a spirit for the weapon, (gain its agreement to being a weapon for a while or if you aren't worried about its agreement you can always **geas** it), **polymorph any object** (to some form which can be an integral part of the weapon), a **know alignment** scroll merged with the weapon by **limited wish, shocking grasp** (for the alignment shock), and **wish** it all together with the other powers of the weapon before throwing the **permanency** in on top. Note that the alignment of the weapon is the same as that of the summoned spirit and that weapons 'containing' elementals will give alignment-shocks to all the extreme alignments (LG, LE, CG, CE). If the **shocking grasp** scroll and/or the scroll of **know alignment** are not used, the weapon will, if the wording of the **geas** allows it, not co-operate with anyone behaving in a way which conflicts with the weapon's alignment — although in such a case the sword cannot give alignment shocks. Speech requires **magic mouth** and **limited wish**, telepathy requires **ESP** and **wish**, empathy only a **message**.

Remember that the weapon cannot be left unattended for long without breaking the enchantment sequence, and though a short absence of the wizard will do no harm, the gap must be bridged by further magical means if the wizard has to do much other work. To allow the maker to go off to work on something else long enough to summon the creature to give the sword its intelligence and put it into a form which allows it to be bound into the weapon, requires a **limited wish**, which will also sustain the enchantment long enough for a follow-up extraordinary power which the intelligence is intended to control. A **limited wish** is also able to extend the enchantment gap long enough to allow the preparation of two extraordinary power parts for adding to the weapon. A full **wish** will extend it long enough for four extraordinary powers, or an intelligence, special purpose, and one extraordinary power, or even intelligence and three extraordinary powers, but although the maker does not have to be continually fondling the item and reinforcing the enchantment, he cannot go more than 30" from the item, which must remain on its stand in the laboratory.

Special functions of the standard weapons are manufactured with the following spells:

+1,+3 vs specific creatures: as a +1 weapon, plus **enchanted weapon** x2, **limited wish**, and part of the creature who will be its target

flame tongue: as +1 plus **burning hands, wish**

luckblade: as luckstone plus **ring of wishes**

frost brand: +3 weapon plus **otiluke's freezing sphere, wish**

+4 defender: as +3 weapon and +3 armour, linked by a **wish**

holy avenger: become a major deity

weapon of dancing: intelligent +4 weapon, **fly, potions of invulnerability, haste, clairvoyance, wish**

weapon of wounding: +1 intelligent weapon, scroll of reversed **regeneration, polymorph any object, wish**

life stealer: +2 weapon, undead with level-draining ability, **geas, polymorph any object, wish**

sharpness: intelligent +3 weapon, **part water, wish**

vorpal: intelligent +5 weapon, **part water, wish**

+1 cursed: +1 weapon, **geas, teleport** as extraordinary powers

-2 cursed: +2 weapon but with full wish instead of limited, **teleport** as extraordinary powers, **globe of invulnerability** plus **limited wish**

cursed berserker: +2 weapon, **geas, teleport, confusion, antipathy,** use full **wish** instead of limited during +2 enchantment.

The abilities of the weapon must be put in during the original enchanting of the weapon: it cannot be 'upgraded' after the **permanency** has been cast.

The enchantment of other items follows a similar pattern, each DM is free to work out his or her own rules on the matter (I have mine, but they use naughty non-approved spells so the editor would cut them to prevent me corrupting his readers.... As for items being enchanted by clerics, druids or illusionists, I am as much in the dark as you. Any ideas out there in the Outer Darkness?

Chris Felton

Enchantment: Five Artifacts For Magical Creation.

The Crown of the Imperium

This is a magic item generally constructed by the court magicians of vainglorious rulers.

The crown itself is constructed by a master jeweller or gemcutter from the finest possible materials available and should cost at least 25,000gp. Optionally, for militaristic rulers or those whose culture emphasises strength this Crown may be made of black iron or similar.

Once constructed the Crown is given to the magic user who washes it in a **potion of delusion**, casts **enchant an item** upon it and then leaves it soaking in another **potion of delusion** for one month. During the third week a **philtre of persuasiveness** is poured over the Crown as it soaks. During all these processes the magic user must be careful not to touch the Crown except while casting the **enchant** spell.

On the day that the Crown is recovered from the potion, the magic user must co-operate with an illusionist who casts **change self** while the magic user casts **charm person** or **charm monster**. The magic user burns the heart of a doppelganger in a brazier and passes the Crown though the smoke, following this with a **permanency**.

The end product is a Crown which makes its wearer seem more imposing (up to 15% taller; wiser; more 'noble') to members of the same race or species, as well as allowing the wearer to cast the appropriate **charm** spell once per day.

The Crown has an xp value of 750 and a sale value of 45,000gp.

The Cloak of Lordliness

The Cloak is a companion item to the Crown. It should be constructed from furs or skin appropriate to the ruler's culture worth at least 6,000gp, sewn together with platinum thread worth 250gp. A Cloak of Lordliness for a human prince or princess would be made of the finest ermine, while one for a hobgoblin chieftain would be made of dwarf or elf skin.

The magic user then takes the Cloak and casts **enchant an item** and **ventriloquism** on it before an illusionist casts **audible glamour** and **deafness**. The magic user then casts a **permanency** upon the Cloak.

The Cloak has the effect of making any oratory by the wearer so inspiring as to cause all within 6" to stop whatever they are doing to listen to the speech, unless they make a saving throw vs magic at -4. This power can be used three times per day.

The Shadowsword

This longsword is made from the finest steel, infused with night hag's blood to darken the metal to almost black. Once the blade has been thus forged, it is treated during construction as a +4 weapon. The magic user casts **monster summoning VI** to call a shadow demon (see the **FIEND FOLIO** Tome), **geas**, and **polymorph any object**, turning it into a handgrip for the sword. This then has **enchant an item** and **permanency** cast upon it and is joined to the sword blade with a **mending** spell.

Know alignment is placed on the sword by a **limited wish** and **shocking grasp** is added to the mix. The magic user then casts **invisibility** and bathes the sword in a mixture of skulk spittle and blink dog blood. Finally the magic user binds all the dweomers together with **permanency**.

The resulting weapon varies its attack effectiveness with the lighting conditions. In bright sunlight the shadowsword is treated as a normal longsword; in overcast conditions it acts as a **longsword +1**; in torchlight it is +2; in darkness, +3. Once per day the sword confers **invisibility** upon its user, until he or she attacks.

The shadowsword is always of chaotic evil alignment, as must be the magic user who constructs it, the weaponsmith who forges it and the person who wields it. It is worth 900xp and sells at 4,500gp.

Glain's Crystal Spheres

These are small (four inches diameter) hollow glass spheres with porcelain cores. **Enlarge** and **shatter** are cast upon the core, and **mending** upon the glass sphere, which binds it into a single incredibly strong unit, without any flaws or weaknesses, containing the core. Each individual Crystal Sphere has a command word which negates the effects of the **mending** spell. Once the command word is spoken the slightest movement of the sphere will cause the core to expand and shatter with a fragmentation effect doing 4d6 (plus the AC number the victim) points of damage to all creatures within a 10' radius.

The sphere can be used as a booby trap by placing a **magic mouth** upon it, primed to say the command word.

Glain's Crystal Spheres have an xp value of 500 and sell for 1500gp each.

The Hourglasses of Auquhol

These magic items are named after the first magic user to create one. The hourglasses come in three types and are the traditional shape, constructed of lead crystal and jade. The 'sand' in the hourglasses is the powdered bones of one or more nilbogs (see the **FIEND FOLIO**® Tome).

The magic user wishing to create one of these useful items must cast **enchant an item** upon both the powdered bones of the nilbog(s) and the structure of the hourglass itself. The magic user creates a scroll bearing one of the **extension** spells and burns this in a new silver pan. Once the resulting ashes are cold they are mixed with the powdered nilbog bones and then sealed into the hourglass. Finally, **permanency** is cast over the whole assembly.

Once constructed, each hourglass will act, once per day, as an **extension** spell of the type used in the construction process. The components of an **extension I** hourglass cost 1,500gp, an **extension II** hourglass cost 3000gp and an **extension III** hourglass cost 6000gp. They require the bones of one, two and three nilbogs respectively.

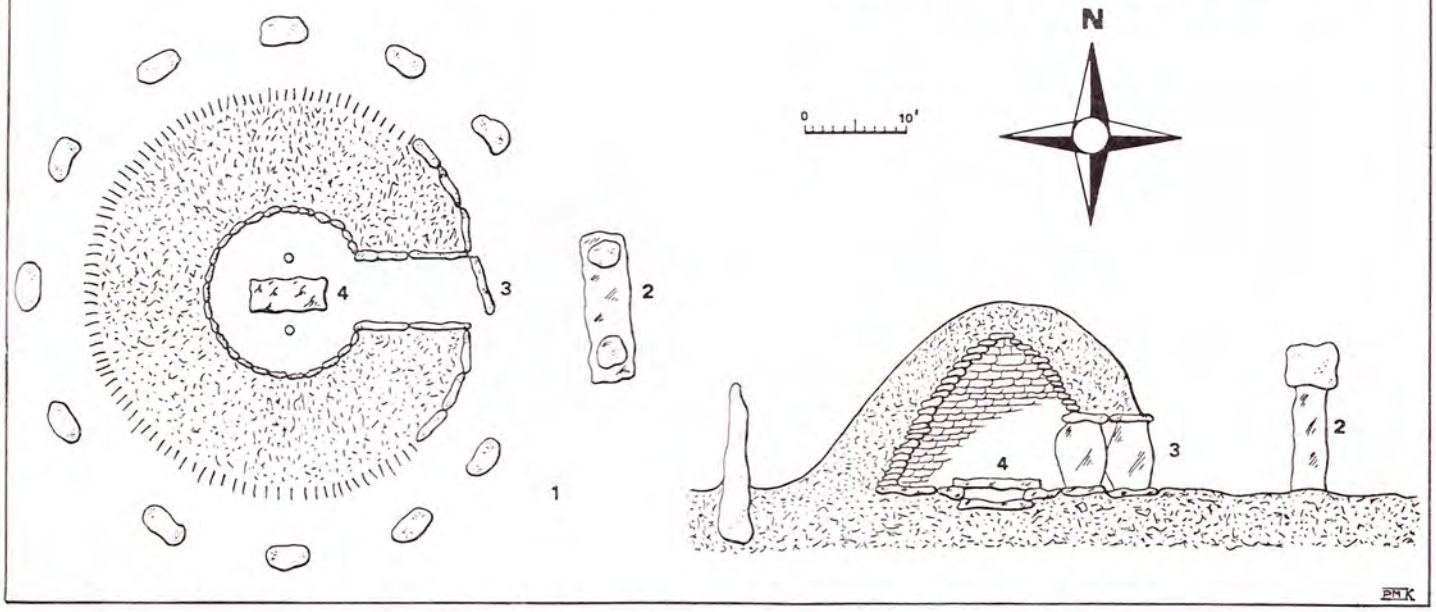
An hourglass of Auquhol may be easily recognised since the 'sand' runs from the bottom to the top. It has an xp value of 750 and a sale value of 10,000gp.

BRIEF ENCOUNTERS - Role-playing Mini-Scenarios

THE MOUND IN THE RING

An AD&D™ Mini-Adventure for parties of 5-8 Adventurers

by Graeme Morris



How to use this BRIEF ENCOUNTER

Brief Encounters are mini-adventures designed so that they may be used with parties of 5-8 adventurers of different levels. If you intend to play in this adventure, you should read no further, since the remaining information is for your Games Master only.

The Main Key describes the adventure, referring to the encounters, traps and treasure in general terms eg *the guards, the priest's treasure, the pit trap.* Italics are always used for these general references.

The exact nature of an encounter, trap or treasure depends upon the level of the adventurers involved, and spaces are provided at the relevant points in the text for the Games Master to insert the details which are appropriate. These details can be found in the section called **Encounters, Traps and Treasure,** listed according to the level of the adventurers.

Example. If a 4th level AD&D™ party was exploring **'The Mound In The Ring',** the following section of the **Main Key**....

If they approach him, *Jairnel,* , (AC ; MV ; HD hp ; #AT ; D) will feel that the adventurers are threatening the body of his master and will attack.

...would be filled in by the Games Master using the **Encounters, Traps and Treasure** section as follows:

If they approach him, *Jairnel,* a young roc (AC **4**; MV **3"/30"**; HD **8**; hp **39**; #AT **2** or **1**; D **1-10/1-10** or **2-16**) will feel that the adventurers are threatening the body of his master and will attack.

Background to this BRIEF ENCOUNTER

Many years ago the chiefs of the primitive tribes which inhabited this area came to desire that the glory and wealth which they had known in life should remain with them after death. To this end those wise in the ways of the Gods devised elaborate rituals by which their departed rulers could be assured of eternal life. After preparation, the dead were laid to rest with their riches in stone-vaulted chambers beneath mounds of earth. These mounds, adorned with rings of standing stones, were then sealed and protected by the most powerful wards which the priests and magicians could devise.

They had thought that their defences would resist the ravages of time but it was not to be. The tombs were broken into and looted one by one, the standing stones were cast down and the mounds flattened. Eventually only one remained. This was protected by the wise ones of the most powerful tribe at the peak of their art, and was the last to be built before the tribes were overrun by foreign invaders.

The magic they placed upon the tomb gave ample protection to the nameless king and his treasures, since the mound, its contents and the standing stones around it were placed on a special ethereal plane. Although the monument remained visible, all normal objects, creatures and even the wind passed through it as if it were a phantom. Any person walking into the place occupied by the mound found himself in inky blackness, not penetrated by magical or ordinary light, or even by the infravision of the non-human races.

The mound and its ring developed an evil reputation and those who knew of it gave it a wide berth. Alone it stood, defying time, the last inviolate reminder of a forgotten race.

Inviolate, that was, until a druid named Croxley discovered the secret of how to penetrate the magical defences. By casting a humble **faerie fire** spell on the trilithon (a structure consisting of a horizontal slab of stone supported by two uprights) opposite the mound's entrance he caused it to become a portal into the ethereal plane on which the mound had been placed. Eagerly passing through, Croxley was able to pull back the stone slab which blocked the entrance by shaping it into a door with a **stone shape** spell. He had forgotten, however, that the ancients guarded their dead in many ways and, on moving the slab, was killed by the simple **glyph** cast upon it.

Jairnel (Croxley's avian animal friend), who had passed through the trilithon with his master, stood guard over the body and, thus grounded, attracted the attention of *the pack*. These canines made to attack the bird but, unwilling to go through the trilithon which glowed still with **faerie fire,** they could not make contact with their target. *Jairnel* counter-attacked but was similarly thwarted. Nevertheless, both bird and hounds continued to lunge at each other, the hounds howling in anger and confusion. The DM should use this noise to attract the attention of the party to the scene.

Location of the mound

The mound may be sited by the DM at any location, provided that the surrounding region is sparsely populated and that a *pack* of the type specified could reasonably be found there.

Main key

1. The Pack

As the party approaches the mound the DM should read the following boxed section to them:

> A mound of earth, about 40 feet across and 18 feet high, comes into view. Placed around it are about a dozen standing stones, each approximately 10 feet high and 3 or 4 feet across. Two of these, closer together than the rest, support a horizontal stone slab to form a trilithion. A faint, glowing light plays over this structure.
>
> At the foot of the mound, adjacent to the trilithon, a stone door stands open. Beyond, a dark passage leads within.
>
> Between the trilithon and the door a pack of hounds can be seen attacking a large bird which seems to be defending a prone, human figure. It is the noise of this fight which you heard earlier. Although the attacks of both sides are fierce, they do not seem to be harming each other at all.

When the party comes into view *the pack;* (AC ; MV ; HD ; hp ; #AT ; D) will break away from *Jairnel* and attack the adventurers.

2. The Trilithon

The trilithon will remain a portal to the mound's ethereal plane so long as the **faerie fire** remains (i.e. 7-12 turns after the party arrive). Characters passing through it from East to West will become ethereal. Going from West to East reverses the process. Casting another **faerie fire** will not prolong the existence of the portal nor can it be restored once the **faerie fire** has ended.

Characters may only make physical contact with Croxley, *Jairnel* and the mound while ethereal. In this state the mound will seem quite normal to them (while the rest of the world will appear insubstantial), but otherwise the druid and his friend will seem to be mere phantoms, and entering the space occupied by the mound will simply plunge any character into inky blackness as described above. No other means of becoming ethereal will enable characters to reach the mound.

If the **faerie fire** expires while any characters are still ethereal they will immediately be restored to the normal plane, breaking short any action or combat taking place at the time. Objects from inside the mound may **only** be brought onto the normal plane if passed through the trilithon from West to East while the portal is still in operation.

3. Croxley and his Animal Friend

If they approach him, *Jairnel*, a (AC MV ; HD ; hp ; #AT ; D) will feel that the adventurers are threatening the body of his master and will attack. Note that *Jairnel* and the party may only harm one another if the adventurers have become ethereal. However, if the party allow the **faerie fire** to run out, Croxley and *Jairnel* will automatically return to the material plane.

When the adventurers are able to examine Croxley's charred body they will find that he has the following treasure and equipment: leather armour and wooden shield (both burned and useless), his *scimitar* a belt pouch, containing some greater mistletoe and his *personal treasure:* , and a back-pack. The *contents of the back-pack* are a gem (value 20gp) with a **continual light** spell cast upon it, two flasks of oil, a cloak, a wineskin full of water, some food,

The back-pack is protected by a **fire trap** (damage ; ½ if save). In his hand is a small piece of soft clay shaped into the form of a crude door.

4. Inside the Mound

As the party enters the mound the DM should read out the following:

> The passage into the mound is about 6 feet high and 6 feet wide. The floor, walls and roof are of crudely shaped stone slabs. The passage leads to some sort of chamber.

When the party reaches the chamber:

> This chamber resembles a beehive in shape. It is about 16 feet across, and the walls, cunningly made of unmortared stones, converge to a central point about 14 feet above the floor. Lying on the centre of the floor there is a stone slab, hewn into a rough rectangle. Two small, sealed ceramic jars stand on the floor on either side of the slab.

Each of the jars contains a *Canopic Shade* (see opposite for details). The northern jar contains a 'brain shade' and the southern a 'heart shade'. Either will attack if the jar is approached.

The rectangular slab covers the shallow depression which is the tomb of the chief. The rituals performed by his priests only ensured partial afterlife for him and he now exists as one of the undead. Since his brain and heart were removed and placed in the canopic jars the *undead chief* (AC ; MV ; HD ; hp ; #AT ; D ; SA ; SD) is unconstrained and resistant to the turning of clerics.

In the tomb the adventurers will find the *chief's treasure* ( ).

Encounters, Traps and Treasure

The Pack

Level 1: 8 wild dogs (AC 7; MV 15"; HD 1+1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; D 1-4)
Levels 2-3: 15 wild dogs (AC 7; MV 15"; HD 1+1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; D 1-4)
Levels 4-6: 15 wolves (AC 7; MV 18"; HD 2+2; hp 10 each; #AT 1; D 2-5)
Levels 7-9: 15 worgs (AC 6; MV 18"; HD 4+4; hp 23 each; #AT 1; D 2-8)

Jairnel

Level 1: Blood hawk (AC 7; MV 24"; HD 1+1; hp 8; #AT 3; D 1-4/1-4/1-6)
Levels 2-3: Giant eagle (AC 7; MV 3"/48"; HD 4; hp 21; #AT 3; D 1-6/1-6/2-12)
Levels 4-6: Young roc (AC 4; MV 3"/30"; HD 8; hp 39; #AT 2 or 1; D 1-10/1-10 or 2-16)
Levels 7-9: Young roc (AC 4; MV 3"/30"; HD 11; hp 52; #AT 2 or 1; D 1-10/1-10 or 2-16)

Croxley's Possessions

Level 1: *Scimitar:* normal; *personal treasure:* 30gp; *contents of back-pack:* 1 vial of **Holy Water**; *fire trap:* d4+3.
Levels 2-3: *Scimitar:* normal; *personal treasure:* 30gp and 1 gem (value 70gp); *contents of back-pack:* flask containing 1 dose of a **potion of animal control (avians)**, *fire trap* d4+4.
Levels 4-6: *Scimitar:* normal; *personal treasure:* 30gp and 3 gems (values 70gp, 2x 100gp); *contents of back-pack:* **scroll** with the druidic spells **predict weather, plant growth, insect plague;** *fire trap:* d4+6.
Levels 7-9: *Scimitar:* **+1**; *personal treasure:* 30gp and 4 gems (values 70gp, 2x 100gp, 300gp); *contents of back-pack:* flask containing a dose of a **potion of extra-healing;** *fire trap:* d4+8.

Undead Chief (Note that this undead creature is non-intelligent and is resistant to the turning effects of clerics).

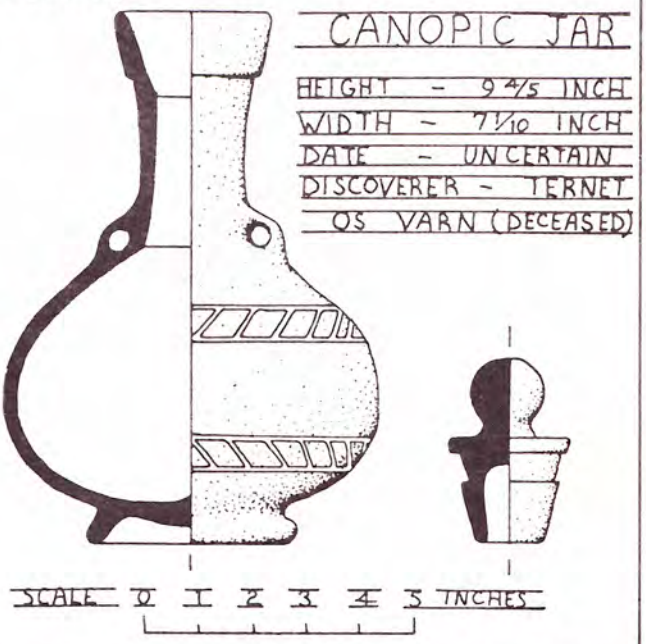
Level 1: Ghoul (AC 6; MV 9"; HD 2; hp 16; #AT 3; D 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA paralysation, SD immune to sleep etc.)
Levels 2-3: Ghast (AC 4; MV 15"; HD 4; hp 27, No. AT 3; D 1-4/1-4/1-8; SA paralysation and stench; SD immune to sleep, etc)
Levels 4-6: Mummy (AC 3; MV 6": HD 6+3; hp 41; #AT 1; D 1-12; SA fear and disease; SD need magic weapons to hit which do half damage).
Levels 7-9: Vampire (AC 1; MV 12"/18"; HD 8+3; hp 47; #AT 1; D 5—10; SA energy drain; SD need magic weapons to hit).

Chief's treasure

Level 1: 5 finely made flint arrowheads which may be attached to shafts to produce **+1 arrows**. 5 pearls (value 100gp each).
Levels 2-3: 5 arrowheads (as above); an amber bracelet with the properties of a **ring of protection +1**; 10 pearls (value 100gp each).
Levels 4-6: Amber bracelet (as above); a bag containing 5 packets of **dust of disappearance;** 20 pearls (value 100gp each).
Levels 7-9: A golden **censer of summoning air elementals;** 40 pearls (39 are worth 100gp each, the other is a **pearl of wisdom**).

CANOPIC SHADE

FREQUENCY:	*Rare*
No.APPEARING:	*Usually 2 (one of each type, see below)*
ARMOUR CLASS:	*Not applicable*
MOVE:	*Instantaneous (up to 10 feet)*
HIT DICE:	*1+6*
% IN LAIR:	*100%*
TREASURE TYPE:	*Nil*
# ATTACKS:	*Nil*
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	*Nil*
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	*See below*
SPECIAL DEFENCES:	*See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	*Total*
INTELLIGENCE:	*None*
ALIGNMENT:	*Neutral*
SIZE:	*Not applicable*
PSIONIC ABILITY:	*Nil*
	Attack/Defence modes: Nil
LEVEL/xp VALUE:	*III/100 xp + 2xp per hit point.*



These non-corporeal entities may be thought of as fragments of an undead creature. They are created when the brain and heart of a corpse are removed to be interred separately in containers known as canopic jars.

Any undead creature which arises from this corpse will be sundered into three parts. The first will be one of the usual kinds of undead. This will develop from the main corpse and will have all the usual attributes except that, lacking a brain, it will be non-intelligent and, lacking a heart, will be fearless even to the extent of being resistant to the turning effect of clerics. Clerics (and Paladins) affect them as if they were 3 levels below their actual level. Therefore, clerics of levels 1—3 cannot affect these undead.

The other two fragments, which arise from the brain and heart, are known as canopic shades. These shades are quite separate from the main undead and remain inside their canopic jars until a living being comes within 10 feet. When this occurs the shade will move instantaneously from the jar into the creature's body and there try to fulfil its one desire, to become free of the earthly plane by killing the creature and finding rest along with it.

The ability of a character to resist the attack depends on two of its ability scores; **intelligence** and **wisdom** in the case of a shade which arises from the **brain**, and **strength** and **constitution** in the case of the shade from the **heart.**

Brief Encounters are short scenarios, designed to be inserted into any campaign, either to introduce some new element into the game, such as a new monster, spell or magic item, or just as an entertaining diversion along the way.

Could you write a Brief Encounter for IMAGINE magazine? Why not give it a try?

The only thing which can prevent a canopic shade from entering a character is a **protection from evil** (spell or otherwise). Failing this, the shade will automatically gain entry and begin to attack the creature from within. Each round that the shade is within the character the DM should subtract d8 x d6 (i.e. d8 multiplied by d6) from the current total of the character's two appropriate ability scores and apply the results as follows:

Total of abilities minus d8 x d6 is:	**Result**
0 to 35	*Shade takes one hit point of damage*
-1 to -12	*Character loses d4 points (temporarily) from one randomly determined ability score.*
-13 to -34	*Character loses one point (permanently) from one randomly determined ability score.*

If any of the character's ability scores falls below 3 (including temporary effects), it will be fatal. If the victim dies the shade will pass away with it and not attack any other character.

Canopic shades will always attack until destroyed (reduced to zero hit points) or until the victim dies.

A victim managing to destroy a shade will gain one point on one randomly determined ability score.

CREDITS!
Art and Design: **Graeme Morris**

THE ADVENTURES OF NIC NOVICE

PART TWELVE — THE ATTACK
GROBSEK, THE KOBOLD WHO HAS BEEN RESCUED BY THE ADVENTURERS, HAS PROMISED TO TAKE THEM TO THE ORCS' LAIR BY A SECRET WAY... HE LEADS THEM FURTHER INTO THE WOOD AND THEN DOWN A SMALL DARK TUNNEL HIDDEN BEHIND SOME BUSHES...
LOOK! THERE'S A CHAMBER AHEAD.....
KOBOLDS!! SLEEP YOU DOGS...SLEEP
AARGH! I'M TRAPPED! SARAK!
THEN, SUDDENLY...

Players of fantasy role-playing games take on the personae of fearless fighters, devout clerics, spell-casting magic users and cunning thieves. Using these characters, they experience the thrill of exploration and combat on many exciting and unique adventures.

The following is an account of a Basic DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game. Sue is the Dungeon Master or referee who has previously prepared the adventure and runs it with reference to the rules. She acts as the eyes and ears of the party, describing what they can see and reasonably expect to know. The players then react to her descriptions according to how their characters would, were they actually in the situation described.

The party consists of five characters:

***Norva Ironarms,** played by Nic. A 1st level fighter lacking experience, but willing to engage in combat to protect his friends and to gain glory.*

***Brumhold,** played by Jon. The party's other fighter, also of 1st level, Brumhold has seen more action than Norva. He is a very honourable character who finds it difficult to reconcile the taking of life with the need to defeat evil.*

***Lemmy,** played by Terry. A 2nd level thief who is not adverse to backstabbing and stealing anything which comes her way. She and Brumhold have often disagreed in the past, since he considers her profession evil and dishonourable.*

***Jolinda,** played by Anne. A 1st level cleric, dedicated to the eradication of chaos. Although compassionate, Jolinda shows no mercy to enemies of Law.*

***Sarak,** played by Alan. A 1st level magic user interested in gaining wealth and power. Sarak cares little what happens during an adventure, providing he profits in the long run.*

The party has been hunting a band of marauding orcs responsible for destroying a village. They encountered part of the orc band and rescued a captive kobold – a small, scaly creature. Grobsek, the kobold, has promised to lead them to the orc lair.

After resting for the night in a cave, the party follows the kobold along the trail.

Sue — 'Grobsek leads you through the dark wood for nearly an hour, stopping at the bottom of a small hill. He points towards a clump of bushes, and says: "That secret way to orcs. See! Me lead you here, soon you be lots rich and Grobsek go home to family." '

Covered by Brumhold's bow, Norva and Jolinda advance cautiously to the bushes and search them, slowly.

Sue — 'Hidden behind them is a four foot-high tunnel that slopes down slightly. Hardly any light penetrates, and you cannot see very far.'

Jolinda opens her backpack and removes a torch and tinderbox. Once it is lit, she holds it in the entrance. Sue informs Anne that the tunnel continues for fifteen feet and then widens. She then tells the players that Grobsek is offering to go first. Sarak's suspicions are aroused sufficiently for him to insist that a fighter go first.

With Norva leading, they enter the small tunnel and make their way to the point where it widens. Sarak begins to make a map to prevent them getting lost.

Sue — 'The tunnel enters a chamber 20 foot wide and 30 foot long. Across the chamber are three narrow exits, one east, one south-east and one north-east. As you enter the chamber, Grobsek runs forward yelling and disappears down the north-east tunnel.'

Norva — 'I'll get him!'

Sue — 'Norva, you get almost to the entrance when a weighted net drops on you from above, pinning you to the ground. At this point 12 kobolds charge into the room from the north-east.'

Sarak — 'I'm casting my **sleep** spell!'

Brumhold — 'I'll save you, Norva!'

Sue asks one of the players to make an initiative roll to see if they react quickly enough. Jon rolls a 5, and Sue rolls a 3. The party will react first. Sarak's spell, according to the description Sue has in the rule book and a roll of two dice, will put all the kobolds to sleep. Sue tells the players that this is so.

Brumhold — 'I'm checking the way they came in. Can I see any more coming?'

Sue — 'No.... but it is dark, and you can't see very far.'

Jolinda pulls Norva out from under the net, while Lemmy searches the fallen kobolds — quietly slaying each with her dagger. Sue is aware that a second group of kobolds will now make an appearance, and she rolls a die to decide whether the party is surprised by them. Fortunately, they hear the kobolds coming.

Sue — 'More sounds come from the east tunnel. You see a huge, ugly kobold enter, carrying a sword. On either side of him are four big, mean-looking kobolds. They see the bodies, howl obscenities at you, and rush to the attack.'

The players quickly describe the reactions of their characters. Sarak has used his only spell, and runs for the entrance, and Lemmy dives for the shadows. With Norva struggling to get free of the net, only Jolinda and Brumhold are free to face the kobold chief and his bodyguards.

The players lose the initiative roll, so Sue rolls to see if the kobolds hit them. The players are unlucky. The chief kobold and a bodyguard hit Brumhold, another hits Jolinda. Sue rolls again to find the damage caused, and tells the players to subtract this from the current hit points for their adventurers. Brumhold is badly wounded — he has just 1 of his previous 7 hit points left, while Jolinda, who started at 6 hit points, now has only 2.

It is now the players turn to act. Brumhold swings and hits one of the bodyguards, killing it instantly. Jolinda

misses. Sue tells Nic that his fighter has successfully escaped from under the net.

For the next round of combat, initiative is rolled again, and the players win. Norva rushes in and kills a bodyguard, Jolinda wounds another, but Brumhold misses. The situation is now desperate, since it is the kobolds' turn to hit, and any blow is likely to kill Brumhold or Jolinda. But Terry suddenly announces that Lemmy will leap out of the shadows, aiming her shortsword at the back of the chief. She adds 4 to her 'to hit' roll, since she is using her thief's backstabbing ability, and then doubles the damage done as well. The result is that the chief falls to the floor, with the sword between his shoulders.

With the chief dead, Sue makes a morale throw for the two remaining guards, to determine whether they remain in the fight. They choose to run, but do not get far before Norva and Jolinda strike them down. The adventurers take a well-earned rest, and Sarak returns to join them. Lemmy has completed her grisly work on the sleeping creatures, having spared just one — Grobsek....

Brumhold — 'Curse it, that was close. I thought we were dead, until.... until....'

Lemmy — 'I saved your neck, eh hero? Don't mention it. Just because you're dumb as they come, I wouldn't let you get done over by something even uglier.'

Brumhold — 'You make it very difficult to be grateful for long, cut-throat....'

Jolinda — 'We must not forget to offer grateful prayer for our deliverance.'

Norva — 'But what now? You and Brumhold are sorely hurt, and our mage has cast his only spell. Do we press on, or do we seek a safer refuge?'

The players discuss their choices, aware of the danger their characters face. Do they go, or stay? How should they decide?

Next month - The Treasure

Jim Bambra & Paul Ruiz

DISPEL CONFUSION

Role-playing games have complex rules which sometimes cause problems of interpretation to gamers. ***Dispel Confusion*** *is a column intended to help gamers by providing solutions to these problems.*

At present we mainly answer questions about TSR games, and while the answers we arrive at may not be fully official, we do at least have contact with the designers.

An answer column needs questions, so send yours to: ***Dispel Confusion, TSR UK Ltd, The Mill, Rathmore Road, CAMBRIDGE CB1 4AD.***

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® and ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® games

Q. Are rangers' spells identical to true magic-user spells (ie requiring the ranger to possess a spell book, use material components etc), or merely similar in effect? (*Advanced*)

A. The use of magic-user spells by rangers is identical in all respects to their use by true magic users. Rangers are bound by the restrictions of intelligence as far as the number of magic-user spells they may know is concerned. They are also subject to the rules concerning the acquisition of magic-user spells set out on p39 of the **Dungeon Masters Guide**.

However, there is a major difference with spells which are variable in their effects by the level of the caster (such as **dancing lights**). In a case like this, the ranger is treated as being his or her level minus 8 for magic user spells, or his or her level minus 7 for druidic spells. Thus a 10th level ranger casts magic-user spells as though a 2nd level magic user and druidic spells as though a 3rd level druid.

Q. What does a quarterstaff cost? Its price is not given in the **Players Handbook**. (*Advanced*)

A. A quarterstaff is one of the simplest weapons in the world — not much more than a six foot length of hardwood, such as ash. Consequently we think its price would be no more than 2sp. The only simpler weapon we can think of is a rock — and they are free!

Q. Given that half-elves and half-orcs (in the Advanced game) exist, why aren't there any half-dwarves, half-ling-gnomes or dwarf-elves? (*Basic & Advanced*)

A. Half-elves and half-orcs are hybrids of those races with human beings, who are, if you like, the basic humanoid creature of the game. The other races are not prolific enough (or that way inclined) to interbreed with each other. The Racial Preferences Table (**PH** p18) shows just how few of the races would get on well enough. The only exceptions to this general principle are probably orcs who, given the chance, will breed with anything.

Q. How does a **potion of fire resistance** work against dragon breath when it reduces the amount of damage done per damage die? Dragon breath does not work that way. (*Advanced*)

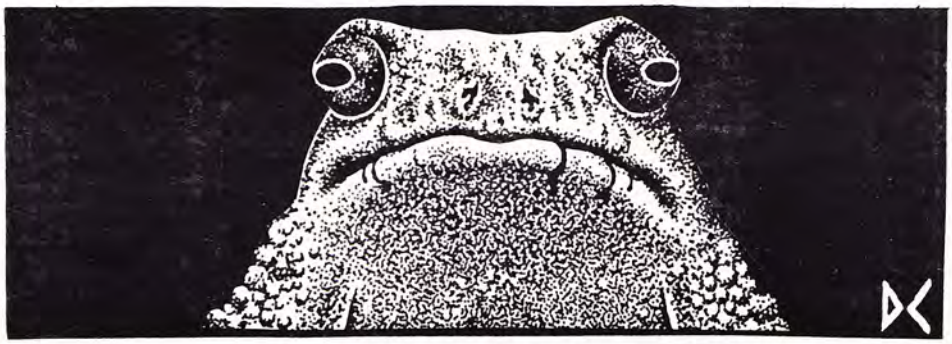
A. Dragon breath is calculated as the equivalent of the dragon's current hit points. Therefore we suggest that the effect of a potion of fire resistance would be to reduce the amount of damage done by dragon breath by 2 points per hit die of the dragon.

As an example: a 9 hit dice adult red dragon (with 5 hit points per hit die giving 45 hit points and 45 points of damage for its breath weapon) would be treated as a 9 hit dice sub-adult dragon with 3 hit points per hit die when breathing on someone who had consumed a potion of fire resistance. Another adventurer standing next to this potion-tippler will still take 45 points of damage. The moral of this example is share your potions with your friends.

Q. If a Cleric with a wisdom of 18 gains a **pearl of wisdom** does the use of the item enable the cleric to gain a wisdom of 19? (*Advanced*)

A. Yes. The cleric in question would gain a wisdom of 19 for as long as the pearl was in his or her possession. Details of the effects of this improved wisdom can be found on p7 of the **DEITIES & DEMIGODS™** Cyclopedia.

Mike Brunton, Graeme Morris, Phil Gallagher and Jim Bambra



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Film Review

This month, Colin Greenland takes a look at more films with a sci-fi/ fantasy theme that might appeal to adventure gamers: ***Krull, Never Say Never Again,*** *and on video,* ***The Raven****.*

What is it about worlds of fantasy and magic that makes them so vivid in the mind's eye but so difficult to capture on celluloid? The planet of **Krull** (Columbia, PG), besides locations in Italy and the Canaries, occupied twenty-three lavish sets at Pinewood for five months. It features a friendly cyclops, a fourteen-foot crystal spider (not friendly), sixteen horses with flaming hooves, and a mountain that flies through space — and yet, and yet....

Krull is the story of Prince Colwyn (Ken Marshall) and his quest to rescue Princess Lyssa (Lysette Anthony) from the Beast and his inhuman Slayers. Director Peter Yates surrounds his hero with a motley band of fantasy figures, wizards and rogues, but makes very little use of their characters. All Lyssa gets to do is run up and down in a frilly white dress, while Colwyn and crew are shunted relentlessly from awesome set to awesome set. ('*Only one person/ thing can help us now: the Magic Glaive/ Emerald Seer/ Widow of the Web. We must go to the Great Swamp/Iron Desert/Black Fortress without delay.*') Some of the set work is undeniably impressive, especially the interiors of the Black Fortress, which look as if they were carved out of bone by Salvador Dali. If as much attention had been paid to the plot as to the visuals, instead of all this '*It is the time. I/we must go/stay alone/ together*' stuff, perhaps it wouldn't be so hard to care what happens next.

Doing it once more with feeling is also the problem of James Bond in the appropriately titled **Never Say Never Again** (Warner, PG). Fighting off cruise missiles with one hand and toupée jokes with the other, Sean Connery makes a much-trumpeted comeback in a movie loosely based on the only fragment of Bond written by Ian Fleming but not bought up by Cubby Broccoli.

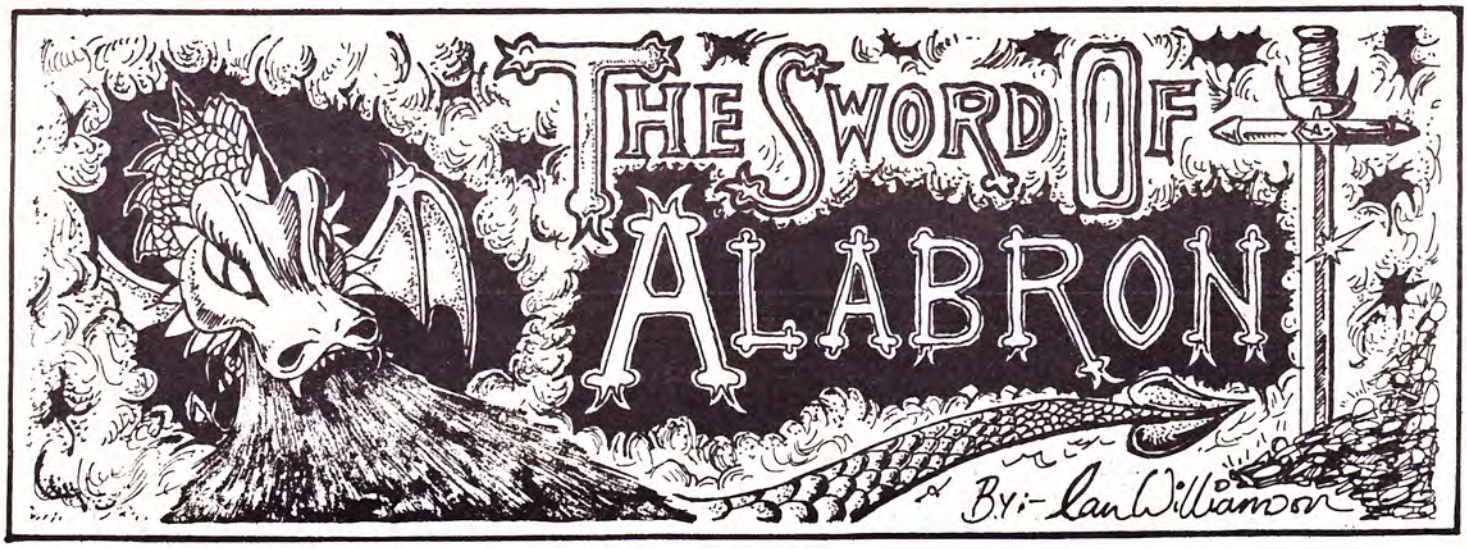
Wisely (apart from the toupée) Director Irvin Kersher has chosen to emphasize Bond's age instead of disguising it. Certainly Bond has never lost so many fights before. He gets killed twice during his refresher course, and has to spend time at a health farm before going back into the field. His gadgets aren't what they were, either, with Q's department feeling the pinch of budget cuts. But the luxurious locations are the same as ever, if not more confusing, with a shark fight in the Bahamas and a bike chase in the South of France — or was it the other way round? At times Connery comes on just a shade too deliberate, as if reminding himself of who he is supposed to be, but apart from that he emerges quite creditably. Don't expect him to have learned anything about changing sexual manners, though. Like **Krull, Never Say Never Again** is a complacent male sexist fantasy, where women can be only *femmes fatales* or passive victims.

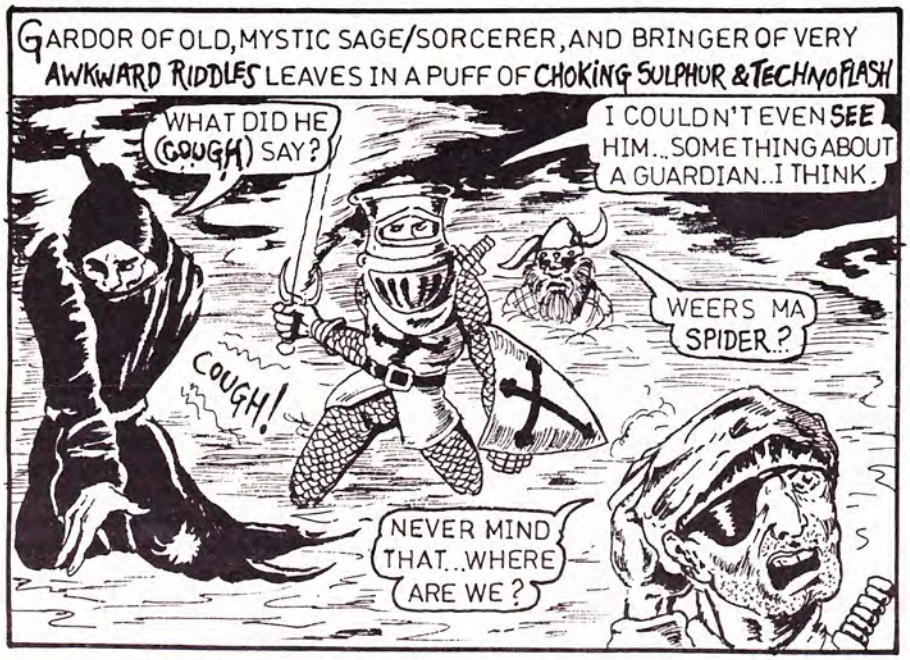
Come to that, the same is true of Roger Corman's **The Raven**, though that was made twenty years ago. Now on video from Orion, it features Vincent Price, Peter Lorre and Jack Nicholson as an improbable trio romping irreverently through a yarn that must have had Edgar Allan Poe turning in his vault. Lorre gets changed into a big black bird (no, not the Maltese Falcon) by Dr Scarabus (Boris Karloff — yes, he's in there too, somewhere). He begs Price for the ingredients of a spell to set him right: 'Dead man's hair? Bat's blood? Jellied spiders?' 'We don't have any of those things' apologizes Price. 'We're vegetarians.' Not so much a raven, more a bit of a lark.

Speaking of birds, did you know that Hitchcock's movie needed 3,200 of them, all specially trained? That Joan Collins, Eartha Kitt and Liberace all played villains in the **Batman** TV series? That Bruce, the **Jaws** shark, was named after Steven Spielberg's attorney? That if Christopher Reeve hadn't got the part, Superman might well have been played by Robert Redford? You didn't? Well, what you need is the Hamlyn **Book of Horror and SF Movie Lists**. Roy Pickard lists everything from the historical (all 71 Hammer films) to the horrible (50 grisliest scenes), from Mad Doctors to Music Scores, from **Star Trek** credits to King Kong's vital statistics. (And do you want to know who did his hair in the 1976 remake?). Entertain guests by listing all ten curses from **The Abominable Dr Phibes** or the ten *real* curses that jinxed **The Exorcist**. Baffle experts. Amaze family and friends. Become absolutely insufferable.

Colin Greenland

Watch this space next month when David Pringle will be back after a period of unexpected absence, reviewing some fantasy/ science fiction books recently published that might be inspirational to adventure gamers.


THE SWORD OF ALABRON
BY:- Ian Williamson

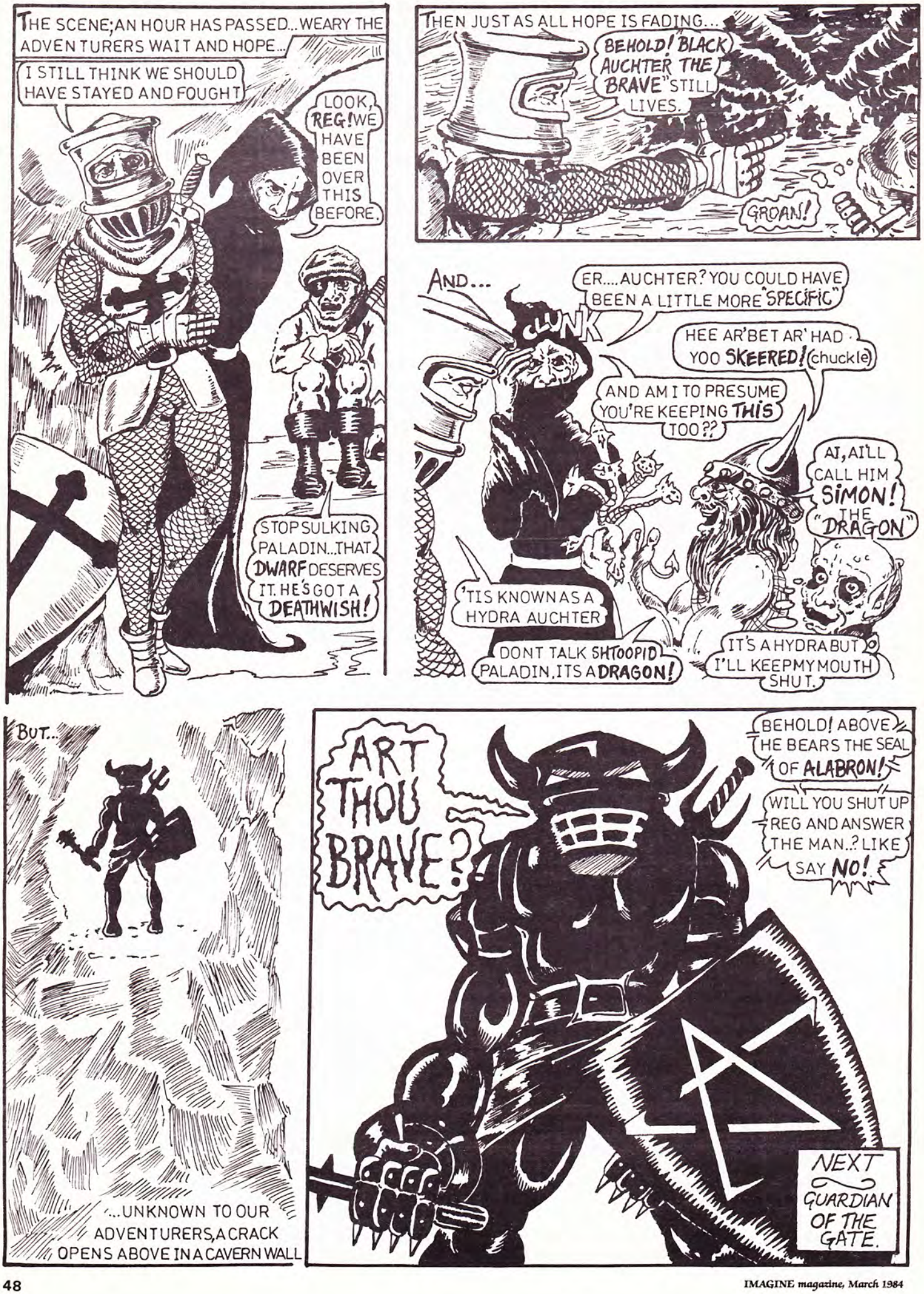

GARDOR OF OLD, MYSTIC SAGE/SORCERER, AND BRINGER OF VERY AWKWARD RIDDLES LEAVES IN A PUFF OF CHOKING SULPHUR & TECHNOFLASH
WHAT DID HE (COUGH) SAY?
I COULDN'T EVEN SEE HIM...SOMETHING ABOUT A GUARDIAN..I THINK.
WEERS MA SPIDER?
COUGH!
NEVER MIND THAT...WHERE ARE WE?

TRUE ENOUGH...THE ROOM HAS VANISHED AND THEY ARE IN A VAST CAVERN...
AR'BET HE KNOWS
WHO?!
HEY BEASTIE? WEERS MA' SPIDER? AN'WEER ARE WE?

IN THE CLOSING STAGES OF YOUR PALTRY LIVES..
HA
HA
HA
HA
HA
THE WAND WIZARD! GIVE ME THE WAND... ...OR YOU SHALL NEVER PASS.

OH!! THE..ER.. ...WHAT WAND??
krells bells! give it to him!!
GIVE!
NOW LISTEN HERE "MORDOR MUSH" HELLSPAWN THOU ART.SO STAND ASIDE OR FACE MINE SWORD DANTE" (tis +4 vs undead so I WARN THEE..!)

"GIVE...WIZARD!
WELL...ITS ONLY A TORCH...WATCH!
AGLAREB
WHOOMPH
A BLINDING GREENISH-WHITE FLASH ENGULFS THE UNDEAD CREATURE MUCH TO EVERYONES SURPRISE.
NOO THA'WUS CLEVER WIZARD, AI LIKED THA'!
WE WIZARDS KNOW MANY TRICKS!
YOU JAMMY ⊙*%?*!
NIGHTSWIFT, OF COURSE, PRETENDED IT WAS INTENTIONAL
THE "DYING" CREATURE RAISES THE PORTCULLIS...
AIEEEE
RODDAAR
THE PARTY CHARGE PAST AS THE BALEFUL CRY OF SOME FEARSOME DENIZEN ISSUES FROM THE CAVE BEHIND!
COME, WE MUST MAKE HASTE
WHATEVER MAKES YOU SAY THAT??
BUT FOR "ONE DWARF AND HIS BOG" CURIOSITY IS TOO MUCH
AUCHTER! IN KRELLS NAME, DO NOT TARRY.
ET COOD BE ANOTHER SPIDER. HOO C'N TELL?
TO SAY THE PARTY MOVED IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION FASTER THAN THEY HAD EVER MOVED BEFORE WOULD BE A GROSS UNDERSTATEMENT
KRELLS CANNON FODDER.... TIAMAT!
POOF
ACH...BRILLIANT!
OH NO...WHATS HE FOUND...?
...BUT GUESSWHA' ITS GOT FIVE HEADS!!
ITS A DRAGON!


THE SCENE; AN HOUR HAS PASSED... WEARY THE ADVENTURERS WAIT AND HOPE...
I STILL THINK WE SHOULD HAVE STAYED AND FOUGHT
LOOK, REG! WE HAVE BEEN OVER THIS BEFORE.
STOP SULKING PALADIN... THAT DWARF DESERVES IT. HE'S GOT A DEATHWISH!
THEN JUST AS ALL HOPE IS FADING...
BEHOLD! "BLACK AUCHTER THE BRAVE" STILL LIVES.
GROAN!
AND...
CLUNK
ER.... AUCHTER? YOU COULD HAVE BEEN A LITTLE MORE "SPECIFIC"
HEE AR'BET AR' HAD YOO SKEERED! (chuckle)
AND AM I TO PRESUME YOU'RE KEEPING THIS TOO??
AI, AI'LL CALL HIM SIMON! THE "DRAGON"
'TIS KNOWN AS A HYDRA AUCHTER
DONT TALK SHTOOPID PALADIN, ITS A DRAGON!
IT'S A HYDRA BUT I'LL KEEP MY MOUTH SHUT.
BUT...
...UNKNOWN TO OUR ADVENTURERS, A CRACK OPENS ABOVE IN A CAVERN WALL
ART THOU BRAVE?
BEHOLD! ABOVE HE BEARS THE SEAL OF ALABRON!
WILL YOU SHUT UP REG AND ANSWER THE MAN..? LIKE SAY NO!
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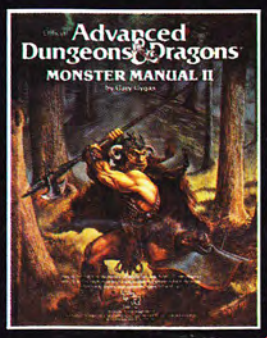

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